

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

*In the Name of Allah,
the All- beneficent, the All- merciful*

قال الله تعالى:

﴿إِنَّمَا يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّجْسَ أَهْلَ الْبَيْتِ وَيُطَهِّرَكُمْ تَطْهِيرًا﴾

Indeed, Allah desires to repel all impurity from you, O People of the Household, and purify you with a thorough purification.

(Surat al-Ahzab 33:33)

Prophetic traditions mentioned in both Sunni and Shia authoritative reference books of *hadith* and *tafsir* (exegesis of the Quran) have confirmed that this holy verse was revealed to exclusively refer to the People of the Cloak [*ahl al- kisa'*], viz. Muhammad, Ali, Faṭimah, al-Ḥasan, and al-Ḥusayn (a) as the *Ahl al- Bayt* (People of the Household). For instance, refer to the following references: *Sunni*: Ahmad ibn Ḥanbal (d. 241 AH), *al-Musnad*, 1:231; 4:107; 6:292, 304; *Sahih Muslim* (d. 261 AH), 7:130; al-Tirmidhi (d. 279 AH), *Sunan*, 5:361 et al.; al-Dulabi (d. 310 AH), *al-Dhuriyyah al-Tahirah al-Nabawiyyah*, p. 108; al-Nasa'i (d. 303 AH), *al-Sunan al-Kubra'*, 5:108; 113; al-Ḥakim al-Nayshaburi (d. 405 AH), *al-Mustadrak ala' al-Sahihayn*, 2:416, 3:133, 146-147; al-Zarkashi (d. 794 AH), *al-Burhan*, p. 197; Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani (d. 852 AH), *Fath al-Bari Sharh Sahih al-Bukhari*, 7:104.

Shia: al-Kulayni (d. 328 AH), *Usul al-Kafi*, 1:287; Ibn Babawayh (d. 329 AH), *Al-Imamah wa' al-Tabsirah*, p. 47, *hadith* 29; al-Maghribi (d. 363 AH), *Daa'im al-Islam*, pp. 35, 37; al-Saduq (d. 381 AH), *al-Khisal*, pp. 403, 550; al-Ṭusi (d. 460 AH), *Al-Amali*, *hadith* 438, 482, 783.

For more details, refer to the exegesis of the holy verse recorded in the following books of *tafsir*: al-Jassas (d. 370 AH), *Ahkam al-Quran*; al-Wahidi (d. 468 AH), *Asbab al-Nuzul*; Ibn al-Jawzi (d. 597 AH), *Zad al-Masir*; al-Qurtubi (d. 671 AH), *al-Jami' li- Ahkam al-Quran*; Ibn Kathir (d. 774 AH), *Tafsir*; al-Tha'labi (d. 825 AH), *Tafsir*; al-Ṭabari (d. 875 AH), *Tafsir*; al-Suyuti (d. 911 AH), *al-Durr al-Manthur*; al-Shawkani (d. 1250 AH), *Fath al-Qadir*; al-Ayyashi (d. 320 AH), *Tafsir*; al-Qummi (d. 329 AH), *Tafsir*; Furt al-Kufi (d. 352 AH), *Tafsir* at the margin of the exegesis of *Surat al-Nisa'* verse 59; al-Ṭabarsi (d. 560 AH), *Majma' al-Bayan*, as well as many other sources.

***THE LIFE OF
IMAM MUHAMMAD Al-JAWAD (AS)***

قال رسول الله ﷺ:

"إني تاركُ فيكُمُ الثَّقَلَيْنِ: كتابَ الله، وعترتي أهلَ بيتي، ما إن تمسكْتُم بهما لن تضلوا أبداً وأنَّهُما لن يَفترقا حتَّى يردا عليَّ الحوضَ"

The Messenger of Allah (s) said: "Verily, I am leaving among you two precious things [thaqalayn]: The Book of Allah and my progeny ['itrati], the members of my Household [Ahl al- Bayt]. If you hold fast to them, you shall never go astray. These two will never separate from each other until they meet me at the Pond [hawd] (of Kawthar)."

Some references:

- ❑ al-Hakim al-Nayshaburi, *al-Mustadrak 'ala' al-Sahihayn* (Beirut), vol. 3, pp. 109-110, 148, 533
- ❑ Muslim, *al-Sahih*, (English translation), book 31, *hadiths* 5920-3
- ❑ al-Tirmidhi, *al-Sahih*, vol. 5, pp. 621-2, *hadiths* 3786, 3788; vol. 2, p. 219
- ❑ al-Nasa'i, *Khasa'is 'Ali ibn Abi Talib*, *hadith* 79
- ❑ Ahmad ibn Hanbal, *al-Musnad*, vol. 3, pp. 14, 17, 26; vol. 3, pp. 26, 59; vol. 4, p. 371; vol. 5, pp. 181-182, 189-190
- ❑ Ibn al-'Athir, *Jami' al-Usul*, vol. 1, p. 277
- ❑ Ibn Kathir, *al-Bidayah wa al-Nihayah*, vol. 5, p. 209
- ❑ Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Qur'an al-'Azim*, vol. 6, p. 199
- Nasir al-Din al-Albani, *Silsilat al-Ahadith al-Sahihah* (Kuwait: al-Dar al-Salafiyyah), vol. 4, pp. 355-358.

***THE LIFE OF IMAM MUHAMMAD
AL-JAWAD (AS)***

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PREFACE

In the Name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful

The invaluable legacy of the Household [Ahl al-Bayt] of the Prophet (may peace be upon them all), as preserved by their followers, is a comprehensive school of thought that embraces all branches of Islamic knowledge. This school has produced many brilliant scholars who have drawn inspiration from this rich and pure resource. It has provided the Muslim ummah with many scholars whom, following in the footsteps of Imams of the Prophet's Household ('a), have done their best to clear up the doubts raised by various creeds and currents within and without Muslim society and to answer their questions. Throughout the past centuries, they have given well-reasoned answers and clarifications concerning these questions and doubts.

To meet the responsibilities assigned to it, the Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly (ABWA) has embarked on a defense of the sanctity of the Islamic message and its verities, often obscured by the partisans of various sects and creeds as well as by currents hostile to Islam. The Assembly follows in the footsteps of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) and the disciples of their school of thought in its readiness to confront these challenges and tries to be on the frontline in consonance with the demands of every age.

The arguments contained in the works of the scholars belonging to the School of the Ahl al-Bayt ('a) are of unique significance. That is because they are based on genuine scholarship and appeal to reason, and avoid prejudice and bias. These arguments address scholars and thinkers in a manner that appeals to healthy minds and wholesome human nature.

To assist the seekers of truth, the Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly has endeavored to present a new phase of these arguments contained in the studies and translations of the works of contemporary Shia writers and those who have embraced this sublime school of thought through divine blessing.

The Assembly is also engaged in editing and publishing valuable works by leading Shia scholars of earlier ages to assist the seekers of the truth in discovering the truths which the School of the Prophet's Household ('a) has offered to the entire world.

The Ahl al-Bayt World Assembly looks forward to benefit from the opinions of the readers and their suggestions and constructive criticism in this area.

We also invite scholars, translators and other institutions to assist us in propagating the genuine Islamic teachings as preached by the Prophet Muhammad (S).

We beseech God, the Most High, to accept our humble efforts and to enable us to enhance them under the auspices of Imam al-Mahdi, His vicegerent on the earth (may Allah expedite his advent).

It is appropriate here to express our utmost gratitude to the Islamic Ahl Al-Bayt ('a) Foundation, London for translating the book, as well as to all our honorable colleagues in accomplishing this task especially the dear ones in the Translation Office for undertaking this responsibility. ✍

***Cultural Affairs Department
Ahl al-Bayt ('a) World Assembly***

INTRODUCTION

In the Name of Allah, the All-beneficent, the All-merciful

All praise belongs to Allah who guided His creatures on the right path; and to His chosen leaders, especially the last of the prophets, Muhammad (sawas) and his holy progeny.

Allah created human beings and blessed them with wisdom and the power to think. It is this wisdom which helps a man to find the right path and distinguish between right and wrong; in doing so he chooses the right for his own betterment and fulfils his desires with its help. He (the Lord) made wisdom as proof for His creatures, taught them what they did not know and in this way enabled each individual to reach the perfection appropriate for himself. Also, He made them aware of their targets and responsibilities.

The Holy Book of Allah (the Qur'an) made clear the ways of divine guidance and its elements and necessities. On the one hand, this Book is concerned with reasons; while on the other hand, it has made clear their results. It says:

﴿قُلْ إِنِّ هُدَى اللَّهِ هُوَ الْهُدَى﴾

"... Say: Verily, the guidance of Allah, that is the (true) guidance."¹

﴿وَاللَّهُ يَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ﴾

"... For Allah guides whom He will to a path that is straight."²

1. Surat al-An'am, 6:71.

2. Surat al-Baqarah, 2:213.

﴿وَاللَّهُ يَقُولُ الْحَقَّ وَهُوَ يَهْدِي السَّبِيلَ﴾

"... But Allah tells (you) the truth, and He shows the (right) way."¹

﴿وَمَنْ يَعْتَصِم بِاللَّهِ فَقَدْ هُدِيَ إِلَى صِرَاطٍ مُسْتَقِيمٍ﴾

"... Whoever holds firmly to Allah will be shown that which is straight."²

﴿قُلِ اللَّهُ يَهْدِي لِلْحَقِّ أَفَمَنْ يَهْدِي إِلَى الْحَقِّ أَحَقُّ أَنْ يُتَّبَعَ أَمْ لَا يَهْدِي إِلَّا أَنْ يَهْدَىٰ ۖ فَمَا لَكُمْ كَيْفَ تَحْكُمُونَ﴾

"... Say thou: Allah alone guides towards the Truth. Is then He more worthy to be followed, or he who finds not guidance (himself) unless he is guided? What then is the matter with you? How judge ye?"³

﴿وَيَرَى الَّذِينَ أُوتُوا الْعِلْمَ الَّذِي أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ رَبِّكَ هُوَ الْحَقُّ وَيَهْدِي إِلَى صِرَاطٍ الْعَزِيزِ الْحَمِيدِ﴾

"And those to whom knowledge has come see that the (Revelation) sent down to thee from thy lord is the truth, and that it guides to the path of the Exalted (in Might), Worthy of all praise."⁴

1. Surat al-Ahzab, 33:4.
 2. Surat Al 'Imran, 3:101.
 3. Surat Yunus, 10:35.
 4. Surat Saba', 34:6.

﴿وَمَنْ أَضَلُّ مِمَّنْ اتَّبَعَ هَوَاهُ بَغْيَ هُدًى مِّنَ اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يَهْدِي الْقَوْمَ
الظَّالِمِينَ﴾

"And who is more astray than one who follows his own lusts, devoid of guidance from Allah?"¹

Yes, the Great Lord is the fount of real guidance; He is the One who guides human beings along the right path. Wisdom also confirms this; and a wise man surrenders himself wholeheartedly to it. Allah the Almighty has put the inclination for perfection and beauty into man's nature. Having done this, He did him another favour by enabling him to find the path to perfection. Thus He says:

﴿وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ﴾

"I have created the jinn and mankind only that they may serve me."²

As worship is undone if there is no knowledge of he who is being worshipped, the only way to perfection is to worship God almighty and to know Him.

Allah the Almighty has armed every person with two powers: anger and desire. These powers are given to a man to enable him to move towards perfection. He (Almighty God) has not released man from the domination of these two powers and their product; the sensual desires. Where there is a man, there are these two powers accompanying him! Therefore, a man not only needs the power of reason and other abilities which have been given to him by Allah the Almighty – but also something which can guard and protect his vision so that the last divine proof and the blessing of guidance can be confirmed; he can be provided with all the things necessary for him as he chooses, for himself, the right or wrong path.

1. Surat al-Qisas, 28:50.

2. Surat al-Dharyat, 51:56.

Hence, the real purpose of divine guidance is to support human reason together with the guidance of the leaders chosen by Allah the Exalted, on the road towards divine revelation, in every aspect of a man's life.

From the very first day of the history of mankind, the Prophets (as) have been given the responsibility to carry the divine light of guidance so that the servants of Allah do not remain without a guide and leader. The divine words which are also confirmed by human reasoning say the same thing: "The earth is never without divine proof. Divine proof is before, after and with its creatures, in such a way that if only two persons remained on the surface of the earth, one of them would be "divine proof" for the other one. The Holy Book of Allah also says:

﴿إِنَّمَا أَنْتَ مُنذِرٌ وَلِكُلِّ قَوْمٍ هَادٍ﴾

"... Thou art a warner only, and for every man a guide."¹

The prophets (as) and their successors have the responsibility of guiding human beings. Their responsibilities are as follows:

They have to receive the divine revelation in the most perfect manner, which requires the prophet (as) to be perfectly ready to receive it. Therefore, Allah the Almighty chooses the divine messengers Himself. The holy Qur'an has clearly talked about this, saying:

﴿اللَّهُ أَعْلَمُ حَيْثُ يَجْعَلُ رِسَالَتَهُ﴾

"Allah knoweth best with whom to place His Message."²

﴿وَلَكِنَّ اللَّهَ يَخْتَارُ مِنْ رُسُلِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ﴾

"But Allah chooseth of His messengers whom He will..."³

1. Surat al-Ra'd, 13:7.

2. Surat al-An'am, 6:124.

3. Surat Al 'Imran, 3:179.

They have the responsibility to make people aware of the divine mission, which needs perfect ability. The other necessities for this responsibility are to be completely aware of it, to know the goals and targets of this mission and to be free from every kind of mistake and sin:

﴿كَانَ النَّاسُ أُمَّةً وَاحِدَةً فَبَعَثَ اللَّهُ النَّبِيِّنَ مُبَشِّرِينَ وَمُنذِرِينَ وَأَنْزَلَ مَعَهُمُ الْكِتَابَ بِالْحَقِّ لِيَحْكُمَ بَيْنَ النَّاسِ فِي مَا اخْتَلَفُوا فِيهِ﴾

"Men were one community. God sent messengers to give glad tidings to the good and warn the bad. He sent the book in truth so they might judge justly in their disputes..."¹

They have to create a nation which is stable and faithful to the divine mission and make this nation ready to follow their leader. To carry this meaning, the holy book of Allah has utilized two words, "training" and "education".

﴿وَيُزَكِّهِمْ وَيُعَلِّمُهُمُ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحِكْمَةَ﴾

"(He might) purify them from the filth of ignorance and evil characteristics and teach them the Law contained in His book."²

Here "purification" simply means training a man to move towards the perfection appropriate for him. Such training needs a role model enjoying everything required for perfection:

﴿لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُوا اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَذَكَرَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا﴾

"Verily in the messenger of Allah ye have a good example for him that looks unto Allah and the Last Day, and remembers Allah much."³

1. Surat al-Baqarah, 2:213.

2. Surat al-Jumu'ah, 62:2.

3. Surat al-Ahzab, 33:21.

They should keep their mission free of all kinds of deviations, misleading things and distortion. To fulfil such a duty successfully, it is necessary for the prophet (as) to be equipped with educational and spiritual perfection which is known as "infallability".

They should try to put the spiritual targets of the divine mission into effect and should give the ethical values dominance regarding the human soul; also human society. This is only possible within the framework of divine rules and by practising the religious laws. However, such practice needs a political basis in order to build upon the divine values. In order to act upon such plans and put these laws into effect successfully, a leader is needed with abilities such as wisdom, bravery, extraordinary constancy, awareness and information about the psychology of different classes of people within a society; the leader must know of their intellectual, political and social conduct in addition to being aware of the laws related to training and education and the way to live a happy life. These specialties can also be called "educational abilities" which are different from "infallability" which is also known as "spiritual ability".

The prophets (as) and their successors did not waste time but strove to achieve their goals and targets which Allah the Almighty had commanded them to achieve. Some of them lost their lives in the process. They faced trouble and did not squander time on leisure activities. Allah Almighty perfected their constant struggles with the prophetic mission of the last Prophet Mohammed (sawas), the son of Abdullah. Allah the Exalted gave the responsibility of guiding all of mankind to His last Prophet (sawas). The Holy Prophet (sawas) took some astonishing steps during his prophetic mission. Eventually, within a very short period of time, he was able to achieve amazing results. The outcome of twenty-three years of the Prophet's (sawas) endeavours can be summarized as follows:

Presenting a perfect mission with all the necessary elements of durability and survival to man.

Equipping that mission with the necessary requirements to keep it safe from all kinds of deviations and distortions.

Forming a Muslim Ummah which accepted Islam as their school, the Prophet (sawas) as their leader and the divine laws as their laws of life.

Creating an Islamic Government which put the divine laws into effect and raised the Islamic flag.

Presenting the wisdom of divine guidance to the people and becoming a perfect model for such guidance.

The fulfilment of prophetic targets was based on tasks such as:

A just leader possessing the ability to practise the divine mission and keep it safe from the hands of selfish individuals. Making it durable and providing it with continuity.

Determining fair ways of training the people which could be applicable in every era without becoming outdated. Such training can only be done by educators with educational and spiritual abilities; people whose conduct resembles that of the prophets (as).

That is why Allah Almighty willed the Prophet (sawas) to train chosen people from among his holy Progeny for the continuation of this mission. The prophet (sawas) was required to clarify their holy names and hand over the authority of continuing the divine guidance with His permission so that they could protect the religion from being twisted by ignorant deceitful people, and train future generations regarding divine values. This divine program is reflected in the words of the Holy Prophet (sawas) when he says:

"Verily I am leaving among you two precious things [Thaqalayn]: the Book of Allah and my progeny [itrah], the members of my household [Ahl al-Bayt]. If you hold fast to them, you will never go astray. These two will never be rent asunder until they meet me at the Pool [hawd] (of Kawthar)".

The Infallible Imams (as) were the people chosen by the Prophet (sawas) to lead the people after his demise, with the permission of Allah. Their conduct showed the genuine method of Islam. When we research their lives, we come to know about the two-dimensional movement of Islam; a movement within the souls and spirits of the Muslims. Of course, after the demise of the Prophet (sawas), this movement became slower and weaker. That is why the Infallible

Imams (as) attempted to instil awareness among the people. However, during their mission they did not deviate from the path, which is essential for both the leaders and the people. The Infallibles guided the strength of the people along the right path and raised their level of awareness as well as strengthening the revolution which was brought about by the Prophet (sawas). They also motivated people to use their strength in upholding the society of the Prophet (sawas).

The Holy Infallibles also based their lives on the Prophet's (sawas) conduct. People consulted their Imams (as) accepting them as bright beacons of guidance. In this manner, the religious leaders guided the people towards truth and righteousness. They were very constant in their efforts. Also, they strove harder than others to reach the peak of perfection. Their lives were full of struggle, surmounting difficulties and bearing the oppression inflicted by opponents and enemies. To an extent, they preferred martyrdom to living with meanness among their oppressors. At last, after great struggles and strife, they left this world and met their Lord with a feeling of success.

Historians will never be able to draw a complete picture of the lives of these great people. However, we will try to benefit from research and present a satisfactory outline of their lives and conduct.

Our research starts with a description of the Prophet's (sawas) life and ends with a description of the last divine administrator, the Imam of the present era, Imam al-Mahdi (as). We hope that one day Allah the Exalted will lighten the earth with the light of justice of our twelfth Imam (as), inshallah.

The present volume of our research is on the life of Imam Muhammad bin Ali al-Jawad (as) – the ninth Imam of the Holy Household (as).

He was the eleventh Infallible of the divine leaders in Islam, who presented a practical example of the religion in all aspects of his life by his thoughts, way of life and methods. His life, as those of his father and forefathers (as) before him, was a model of divine law in both words and actions.

We are very pleased to be able to present another well-researched product from the Ahl al-Bait World Assembly entitled "A'lam al-Hidayah". This book is the result of great efforts on the part of the

researchers of this institution. Finally, we acknowledge all those people who contributed towards making this book possible and presenting it to the world, specifically the author, S. Munthir al-Hakim, and his co-author the honourable brother, Wissam al-Baghdadi.

We would like to thank Mr. Yunus 'Aghlah al-Musawi, who has taken on the responsibility to re-check all the historical records of the book, and accomplished it for the fifth completed edition, and Mr. al-Baghdadi, who undertook responsibility to type the digital version of the book, along with Mr. Hussain al-Salehi, who has examined the final version of the text with Mr. Abi Baqir al-Azraqi. The final linguistic check was done by Mr. Jawad al-Tahir, and for all of them we pray that Almighty Allah (swt) will accept their pure efforts, and hope that He will support them in their life's fields of struggle, and to Him is our sincere thanks.

***Ahl al-Bayt ('a) World Assembly
Holy Qum***

SECTION ONE

Chapter One

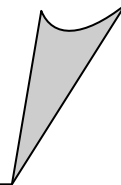
Imam Muhammad Jawad (as) at a Glance

Chapter Two

Understanding Imam Jawad's (as) Personality

Chapter Three

A Display of Imam Jawad's (as) Personality



CHAPTER ONE

IMAM MUHAMMAD JAWAD (AS) AT A GLANCE

Imam Abu Ja'far Muhammad bin Ali Jawad (as) was the ninth Imam from the Household of the Prophet who, given the post of Imamah by the Prophet (sawas) as commanded by Allah the Exalted, took upon himself the responsibility of guiding the Ummah and society. He was from those whose infallibility was confirmed by the holy Book of Allah and whose Imamah had been explained by successive Hadiths and traditions.

Like his forefathers, Imam Jawad (as) displayed eminence and generosity, which provided their possessor with the ability of an Imamah and revolutionary divine guidance. Imam Jawad (as) took the burden of Muslim leadership as Imam at the age of seven. To have leadership and Imamah at such a young age was unusual in those days, and naturally there were those who were highly critical; however, divine justice had already declared this to be appropriate as was in the case of Hazrat Isa (as) when he was awarded prophethood while still a baby in the cradle.

With the early Imamah of Imam Jawad (as), history confirmed the Shi'a belief which states that: "Imamah is a Divine Post which Allah the Exalted gives to qualified and perfect men of any time and era"; these great men were the most qualified and knowledgeable personalities of their time and, with the help of God, were endowed with the highest quality of knowledge and reasoning. They were so successful that the higher echelons of learned people not only acknowledged the Imams' (as) scientific superiority but also confessed to their own comparative weakness.

Jurisprudents, traditionalists and the learned gathered around their seven-year-old Imam (as) for the purpose of slaking their thirst for knowledge and science. They asked him for the solutions to different

doctrinal, philosophical, theological, jurisprudential, interpretational arguments and other sciences.

Imam Jawad (as) also took the responsibility of religious leadership of the Shi'a upon his shoulders like his illustrious father. He trained his Shi'a followers in scientific, spiritual and political fields in such a manner that they were able to walk in the way which the Imams (as) had chosen for them; because, they were going to live in a period of time very different from previous times and would soon be unable to have direct connection with their Imam (as). It was, therefore, imperative that they be fully equipped with intellectual, political, social and economic strength.

In this way, Imam Jawad (as) was able to both identify and strike significant targets in his short but very productive life. His martyrdom at the age of twenty-five is clear proof of the success and victory of his divine programs. His presence in the Islamic society had become so unbearable for the oppressive rulers that, being so irritated and feeling so threatened by his presence, they decided that they were left with no option but to plan his martyrdom in order to halt his activities. They, therefore, added yet another great sin to their mounds of previous great sins and crimes.

CHAPTER TWO

UNDERSTANDING IMAM JAWAD'S (AS) PERSONALITY

When a group of Imam's (as) contemporaries came to know his great personality, they were astonished to see how Allah had blessed him; also those who met the Imam (as) became amazed at his knowledge and greatness. In this discourse, we have compiled some indications of his greatness as mentioned by his contemporaries:

1. Imam Ali bin Musa al-Rida (as) praised his son Imam Jawad (as) in the following manner:

First: Imam al-Rida (as) said before the birth of his son Imam Jawad (as): By God, after some time [not very long], God will bless me with a son with whose help right will be separated from wrong."¹

In another narration, Imam al-Rida (as) said: "...till my son will come into existence and will become my successor. He will bring to life what is right and will destroy and let perish that which is wrong."²

Secondly: when Imam Jawad (as) was born, his father (as) said: This is a baby so blessed and lucky that no equal has ever been among the Shi'a."³

Thirdly: Imam al-Rida (as) said of his son Imam Jawad (as): He is Abu Ja'far. I have seated him in my place and have made him my successor."⁴

Fourthly: Imam al-Rida (as) said of his son Imam Jawad (as) to Safwan bin Yahya:

"Abu Ja'far [Imam Jawad] was the addressee [of the angels]."¹

1. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:320; Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:277.

2. Rijal Kashi p. 463.

3. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:321.

4. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:321.

2. It has been narrated from Muhammad bin Hassan bin Imara: "When one day Abu Ja'far Muhammad bin Ali (al-Jawad – peace be upon him) came into the mosque of the messenger of Allah (sawas), Ali bin Ja'far suddenly jumped up without shoes or formal garment, kissed his hand and glorified him. Imam al-Jawad (as) looked at him and said: "O uncle, sit down please! May Allah have mercy on you."

Ali bin Ja'far bowed respectfully and said: "O my master, how can I sit while you are standing?"

Imam al-Jawad (as) went away and Ali bin Ja'far returned to his companions. They began scolding him for glorifying Imam al-Jawad (as) who was still very young. They said to him: "You are the uncle of his father, so why did you act in that way with him?"

He answered them with the answer of one who believed in his Lord and his religion and who recognized the actual position of the Imamah. He said to them: "Keep silent! It is Allah who has not qualified this beard (he caught his beard with his hand) for the Imamah and has qualified this young man and placed him in that position according to His will. We seek the protection of Allah from what you say. I am just a slave to him (to Imam Jawad)."²

3. Shaykh al-Mufid narrated the following dialogue thus:

"Al-Mamun had a great affection for Abu Ja'far (al-Jawad), peace be upon him, despite his young age because of the great merit he saw in him, because of his attainment in philosophy and literature and because of his intellectual maturity equalled by none of the scholars of the time. He, therefore, married him to his daughter Umm al-Fadl, after which (Abu Ja'far al-Jawad) took her to Madinah with him. Al-Mamun was generous in his honouring and extolling of him and giving him rank and position."³

When al-Mamun wanted to marry his daughter, Umm al-Fadl to Abu Ja'far bin Muhammad bin Ali (al-Jawad), peace be upon him, this

1. Al-Mas'udi, Ithbat al-wasiah p. 212.

2. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:380.

3. Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:281.

news reached the Abbasid (family), and shocked them and they were greatly concerned at his comments; "And as for Abu Ja'far Muhammad bin Ali (al-Jawad), I have chosen him because he is the best of all people in knowledge and virtue though he is still young and I have admired this in him. Woe unto you! I know this young man more than you. He is from people of a house whose knowledge is from Allah Who has inspired them. His fathers have been rich in the knowledge of religion and sciences and have been in no need of imperfect people."¹

After the martyrdom of Hazrat Ali bin Musa al-Rida (as), during his first meeting with Imam Jawad (as) who was then just a ten-year old boy, al-Mamun tested him and then said to him: 'Indeed, you are the son of al-Rida (as)!' He took Imam al-Jawad (as) with him, was good to him and greatly honoured him.

4. After the martyrdom of Imam al-Rida (as), Abu al-'Ayna went to Imam Jawad to condole with him on the loss of his father. He expressed the great value of Imam Jawad (as) saying: you are superior and greater than our praise; and we are inferior to you. You have enough in Allah's knowledge [which He has given to you] and His reward will make you tolerate this grief."²

5. Among other historians writing about Imam Jawad (as) is Allama Sibt bin al-Jawzi Hanafi who died in 654 A.H. He said of Imam Jawad (as): "And Imam Abu Ja'far, the second, followed the footsteps of his father in knowledge, piety and generosity. He was also known as "Murtaza" and "Qani'".³

6. Kamal al-Din Muhammad bin Talha Shafi'i (deceased 262 A.H) narrating from Ibn Jawzi praised Imam Jawad (as) saying: "Although he was young, he had a great position and was very famous."

He also said: "As for the virtues of Abu Ja'far Jawad (as), they did not last long for Divine Fate had determined that he would stay in this world only for a little while and would soon leave for his Lord; so his

1. Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:282.

2. Ibn Shahr'ashub, al-Manaqib 4:362.

3. Tathkirat al-Khawass pp. 358-359.

stay was brief and his days were short. However, during his short life, God blessed him with such a great virtuous and perpetually brilliant position that he became extraordinarily famous.

Then he indicated a eulogy saying that when al-Mamun saw him, he was witness to the Imam's (as) great position."¹

7. Another person praising Imam Jawad (as) is Ali bin 'Isa Arbali, who died in 693 A.H. He expressed his love for Imam Jawad (as) in the form of the following words: "Al-Jawad (as) was in all cases generous (*jawad*) and he suits the lexical definition of the word because the root of the word "*jawad*" is "*judah*"(generosity). He exceeded all people in purity of lineage and birth and sat on the seat of glory. No one has ever approached him in rank or human glory. He was exalted in position. His high position was above the stars and his rank was above all ranks. When a delegation saw a fire, they said: it must be his fire. No fire was predominant over his fire. Exalted was he towards highness. Glory and honour felt proud of him. Mastership found its meaning in him. He was far from any vice and close to every virtue. Nobilities diffused from his sides and glory dripped from him. News of generosity was narrated about him, his progeny and his fathers. Blessed is he who strives to be loyal to him, and woe unto him who tries to be his opponent. When the booty of glory and loftiness are divided, the purest of them will be his, and when the backs of honour are mounted, the highest of them will be his. He matches the rain in generosity, the lion in courage and zeal, and defeats conduct with his good conduct.

When counting his sons and fathers (as all), they are praised with precious words like pearls and, whenever someone wants to praise him, he finds all the glories and honour in his personality which were possessed by his fathers before him and which will be possessed by his sons after him. Who else has a father like his father and a grandfather like his grandfather?

1. Matalib al-Sual fi Manaqib al-Rasul 2:74.

He has a share in their magnificence as they have their share in his. As they filled the empty hands of the needy people, he also filled them with his generosity.

It is because of him that the ways of guidance have been known by everyone and it is because of him that [a man] is saved from all kinds of misdirection. It is his friendship which provides one with the hope of freedom on one's last day of life. In fact, they are the people of kindness and generosity.

All words seem negligible against his magnificence; and good morals have been taken from his. All good virtues are found in this progeny. Thus, paradise is achievable by resorting to them; while hell is earned by their abandonment. These virtues are possessed by each one of them; and the ones present, the ones absent, the sons and the fathers all have these virtues and characteristics.

Their friendship is obligatory; their rule is forever. His friends will be smiling on the Day of Judgment. It is sufficient to show his magnificence and glorification that his grandfather is Muhammad (sawas); his father is Ali (as) and his mother is Fatima (as).

Who can compete with him in virtue and honour? And who can surpass him in greatness of position?

He has progressed towards every good deed without any opponent. He has reached high rank without anyone accompanying him throughout.

People are left beneath him and his journey. This is true; but also certain.

All people are like his slaves. Honours are gained from them and magnificent works have been done in following their path; and generosity is because of their generosity.

If I continue praising them, I have not done wrong; and if I want to count their good virtues the Soraya will shout at me saying: there is no comparison between the Soraya and their questioners. And how

can you count something which has remained uncountable by all those who have died and by all those who will come in the future?"¹

8. Al-Thahabi said: "Muhammad (al-Jawad) was nicknamed al-Jawad (the generous), al-Qani' (the satisfied) and al-Murtadha (being satisfied) and he was one of the chiefs of the Prophet's family he was described as being generous; therefore, he was named al-Jawad."²

9. Ibn Sabbagh Maliki (who died in 855 A.H) said, regarding Imam Jawad (as): He is the ninth Imam and is known as "Abu Ja'far". He gained a great and magnificent position and became very famous at a very early age. On the basis of explicit words, as well as the will of his father Imam Ali al-Rida (as), he was chosen to take charge of Imamah right after his father was no longer able to do so. A group of reliable and just people have also confirmed this pronouncement.³

10. Shaykh Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Amir Shabrawi Shafai', who died in 1154 A.H, introduces Imam Jawad (as) by saying: Muhammad Jawad (as) is the ninth Imam.

He then talks about his lineage and after saying that he was born in 195 A.H. and he continues: His generousities are multiple and his virtues are well-known.

Then after counting the virtues of Imam Jawad (as), he concludes by saying: These are some of his magnificent generousities and beautiful virtues."⁴

11. Another person praising Imam Jawad (as) was Yusuf Ismail Nabahani. He said: Muhammad Jawad son of Ali [bin Musa] al-Rida [as] was one of the magnificent members of Imams (as) and the candle of guidance for the Ummah who is from amongst the people of the Household (as); our leaders and masters.⁵

1. Al-Irbali, Kashf al-Ghumma 3:160.

2. Tarikh al-Islam 8:158; al-Safadi, al-Wafi bi'l-Wafiat 4:105.

3. Ibn al-Sabbagh al-Maliki, al-Fusul al-Muhimmah p. 251.

4. Al-Ithaf fi hub al-'Ashraf p. 168.

5. Jami' karamat al-awliaa 1:100.

12. Mahmud bin Wahib Baghdadi praised Imam Jawad (as) saying: he was the heir to his father's knowledge and virtues. He was excellent in dignity and perfection among all his brothers.¹

13. Fadhl bin Ruzbahan (died in 927 A.H.) explaining the words of praise which he wrote to outline the virtues of the Prophet (sawas) and his progeny, counting the virtues of Imam Jawad (as) says: "O God! Bless your peace on the ninth Imam (as) who always turned to You and prostrated frequently; he who was head of the generous ones; he who blessed the common people; he who removed misdirection and suppressed the ill-doers.

He was the sign of guidance who guided the people on the right path. The "abdals" and "otad" were influenced by him. Abu Ja'far Muhammad Taqi Jawad son of Ali [bin Musa] al-Rida is an inhabitant of the garden of paradise, who enjoys a good life there and who is buried in a Quraish graveyard, near the grave of his forefather.

God! Bless Your peace on our master Muhammad (sawas), his holy progeny, especially Imam (as) Muhammad Taqi Jawad who prostrated frequently."²

14. Another person talking about the Imam (as) and praising him was Khayr al-din Zarkali, who wrote:

"He [Imam Jawad (as)] had a great position. He was wise, a skilled talker and very strong in dialogue improvisation."

Then he adds: "Muhammad bin Wahban Dabili" has written a book about his conduct and has given it the title of "Akhbar Abu Ja'far al-Thani".³

The above is only a small portion of the quotations and writings about Imam Jawad (as) by his contemporaries and those living after him. They expressed their feelings and astonishment without any fear and counsel regarding the blessings of Imam Jawad (as) and about his

1. Jawhrat al-Kalam p. 147.

2. Refer to: Fadhl bin Ruzbahan, the interpretation of salawat; the book is also called Wasilat al-Khadim ilal al-Makhdum pp. 235-240.

3. Al-'Ailam 6:271-272.

personality which was a clear interpretation of the lives of his forefathers (as); who were without doubt beacons of guidance after the Prophet (sawas).

CHAPTER THREE

A DISPLAY OF IMAM JAWAD'S (AS) PERSONALITY

Undoubtedly the virtues of the twelve Imams (as), including Imam Jawad (as), are so many that they cannot be counted. Having been chosen for the post of Imamah by Allah the Exalted is itself a great blessing which is possessed only by these purified men. It is sufficient to distinguish them from other people. They are, therefore, suitable for the post of Imamah, are Divine Proofs for the people and they are the trustworthy people of His revelation.

Every Imam (as) had special virtues and honours. Unfortunately, the difficult conditions were not to the advantage of the virtues, magnificent qualities, greatness and knowledge of the Imams (as) and their followers, whose goal was not only to save but also to propagate the great Islamic heritage. Threats and physical mistreatment against the Imams (as), their followers and those who tried to make the people appreciate the pure conduct of their Imams (as) were enough to wipe out an extent of their great heritage and scientific production.

In this section, we will study the political and traditional aspects surrounding the life, virtues and good morals of Imam Jawad (as):

1. A Talking Newborn

According to historical accounts, immediately after his birth, Imam Jawad (as) announced Shahadatayn (the two testimonies). On the third day following his birth, he admitted the Oneness of Allah, praised Him, His Messenger Muhammad (sawas) and the Imams (as).

Hakimah daughter of Musa bin Ja'far (as) is quoted as saying: "When the mother of Abu Ja'far Jawad (as) became pregnant, I wrote to him [Imam al-Rida (as)]: Your slave girl, Sabikah, is with child.

Imam al-Rida (as) replied: "She became pregnant at such and such a time, day and month. Therefore, when she gives birth to her child, stay beside her for seven days."

When Sabikah had given birth to her child, the newborn started saying: "I bear witness that there is no God other than Him, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."¹

On the third day of his birth, the newborn sneezed and said: "All praise belongs to Allah and peace be upon Muhammad and the guided Imams."

She also said: "When the time of delivery by Khaizuran [the mother of Abu Ja'far (as)] was reached, Imam al-Rida (as) called me and said to me: "O Hakimah! Stay beside Khaizuran at the time of delivery and go with her and the midwife to the room of delivery."

Then Imam (as) lit a candle in the room and closed the door. The time of delivery was approaching as Khaizuran's pain was increasing. There was a tub in front of her for delivering her child. Suddenly the candle was extinguished. I became sad seeing this. Suddenly, Abu Ja'far appeared in the tub. Something which resembled a thin cloth was covering his body whose light brightened the room. I took him in my lap and removed the cover from his body. When I had finished, Imam al-Rida (as) opened the door of his room, took the newborn child from me and laid him in the cradle. Then he said to me: "O Hakimah! Stay behind his cradle."

On the third day, the newborn gazed at the sky for a while, then he looked to his right and then to his left after which he said: "I bear witness that there is no God other than Him, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."

Full of awe, I went to Abu al-Hassan (as) and said to him: "I heard him saying wonderful things."

Imam al-Rida (as) asked me: What did he say?

I told him about what I had just heard.

He said: "O Hakimah! You will see more wonderful things from him."¹

1. Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari, *Dala'il al-Imamah* pp. 383-384/hadith 341; *Madinah al-Ma'ajiz* for Hashim al-Bahrani 7:259-260.

2. Becoming an Imam while a Child

Allah the Exalted wanted Imam Jawad (as) to be blessed with the post of Divine Caliphate over His creatures and be their leader from an early age. However, this was not something new; because Jesus Christ (as) and Solomon (as) had already shown complete ability for taking the charge of prophethood and leadership of the people at a young age. It was very hard for people to accept the leadership of a seven year old boy. Some people were astonished and doubtful about it. However, Imam Jawad (as) decided to remove their doubts about it. Therefore, with an affidavit from the history of the prophets (as), he made a reality clear to them which they formerly had no knowledge about. In the following lines, we will read some traditions regarding what took place:

1. The narrator said 'I said to Abu Ja'far the second: "They speak about (and question) your very young age. He said, "Allah informed David through inspiration to appoint Solomon as the executor of his will and successor while he was just a child minding sheep. The worshippers and scholars of the Israelites disliked it. Allah then inspired David to take the staffs of those who had objections and that of Solomon and place them in a room and seal them with each one's seals. On the next day, whichever staff would be found to have grown leaves and fruits the owner thereof would be the successor. David informed them of this matter and they all agreed."²

2. "Once I saw Abu Ja'far (as) who had come out to me and I began to look at him from head to toe so I could describe him to our people in Egypt. I was watching him until he sat down and said, "O Ali, Allah has supported His argument against the people in the case of Imamat (Leadership with Divine Authority) just as He has done so in the case of the prophets." He went on, "We gave authority to him (John) over the people during his childhood (19:12). When he attained maturity, God gave him strength, wisdom and knowledge.

1. Ibn Shahr'ashub, al-Manaqib p. 394; Madinah al-Ma'ajiz for Hashim al-Bahrani 7:260-261.

2. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:383; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 14:81.

Thus, do we reward those who do good." (12:22) "When he grew to manhood and became forty years old," (46:15). It happens that wisdom comes to a prophet when he is just a child or it may come when he is forty years old."¹

3. "Once Abu Ali ibn Hasan spoke to Abu Ja'far (as) saying, "My master, people refuse to accept your Imamah (Leadership with Divine Authority) because of your very young age." He answered, "Why do they refuse to accept the words of Allah, the most majestic, the most gracious. Allah, the most majestic and most gracious, has said to His prophet (sawas); "(Muhammad), say, 'This is my way. I and all my followers invite you to God with proper understanding.' (12:108) By Allah, only Ali (as) followed him at that time and he was just nine years old. I also am nine years old."²

3. Imam Jawad's (as) Knowledge

Only the most learned person of his era, with complete command and control over all aspects of religion, religious laws, political affairs, management and other social, political and religious needs of the people, is appropriate for the post of Imamah and Divine leadership of the people. Like his father and forefathers (as) before him, Imam Jawad (as) was also the best and the most learned person of his time. Despite his young age, he entered different fields of knowledge and showed his exceptional abilities. He would answer the most difficult religious and jurisprudential questions posed by the best scholars and learned people of his time with great care and accuracy. In this way, he showed his multidimensional scientific command. The scientific and religious debates which were held between Imam Jawad (as) and other scholars of his time resulted in the people's inclination towards the Household's school of thought, propagation and spread of Shia. Also, many scholars rejected their previous scientific perspectives and accepted the Imamah of Imam Jawad (as).³

1. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:315.

2. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:384.

3. Baqir Sharif al-Qarasi, Hayat al-Imam al-Jawad (as) p. 66.

Before talking about some of the branches of his knowledge, we should first mention the source of his divine knowledge which is, of course, one of the specialties of the Household (as):

1. Mas'udi quoted 'Abd al-Rahman bin Muhammad who quoted Kaltham bin Imran: "I said to Imam al-Rida (as): You like children. Ask Allah to bless you with a son."

Imam (as) replied: "I will have only one child and he will be my heir."

When Imam Jawad (as) was born, Imam al-Rida (as) remained beside his cradle whispering to him all night long. After several nights, he said to Imam (as): May I be ransom! Many children have been born before [and no one has ever recited so many prayers in the ears of his child]. But you are reciting too many prayers in his ear?

Imam (as) replied: "Woe is to you! This is not praying but I am making him rich with knowledge and science."¹

2. We have already mentioned the explicit text about Imam Jawad's (as) talking when he was just a newborn; also the explicit text mentioning his post of Imamah at a very young age.²

3. Imam Jawad (as) said: "Imam Abu Ja'far Baqir (as) has said: "Certainly the successors (the Imams (as)) are the addressees and the Holy Spirit talks to them; however, they do not see him."³

There is a tradition that after the martyrdom of Imam al-Rida (as), Abu Ja'far Imam Jawad (as) was taken to the mosque of the Prophet (sawas). He went to the minbar (pulpit), sat on the first step of the stair and started saying: "I am Muhammad son of Ali [bin Musa] al-Rida; I am Jawad; I am aware of people's genealogy while they are in the loins of their fathers. I am aware of your manifest and hidden affairs and what you want to achieve and what is going to happen to you more than anyone else.

1. Ithbat al-Wasiah, fi Imamati Abi Ja'far al-Thai (as) p. 183.

2. Refer to the first and second chapter of this section.

3. Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Saffar, Basa'ir al-Darajat p. 473/hadith 9; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 25:57/hadith 24.

I have gained [this knowledge] from the knowledge which has been given to us by the Creator of all creatures after He created the heavens and the earth. If the wrong people would not support each other; if the rulers were not led astray and if there were not a great number of doubtful people, I would say something which would make people even more stunned and astonished."

Then he put his hand over his mouth and said [to himself]: "O Muhammad! Be silent the way your forefathers were before you."¹

The above lines point to the source of the great knowledge of the Household (as) including Imam Jawad (as). Now we will mention some of his scientific inheritances:

A. Monotheism

At the time of Imam Jawad (as), many suspicions and illusions about monotheism had been raised by the spiteful enemies of Islam to shake the faith inside the hearts of Muslims and make them doubt the beliefs of their great religion. However, their efforts were useless because Imam Jawad (as) refuted many of those suspicions and accusations. Here are some examples:

The narrator states: "I asked Abu Ja'far about the Oneness of Allah saying: "Can I think of Him (the creator) as a thing?"

1. The Imam replied, "Yes, but not as something well understood and clearly defined within limits. What may become a subject of your thoughts is different from Him. Nothing resembles Him and thoughts and imaginations cannot encompass Him. He is different from what can become the subject of thoughts and is different from whatever can be perceived in one's thoughts. You can think of Him as some thing but not well understood and clearly defined (under certain limits)."²

1. Mashariq Anwar al-Yaqin p. 98/Chapter 15; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 25:57.

2. al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:82/hadith 11; al-Saduq, al-Tawhid p. 106/hadith 6; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 3:166/hadith 32.

2. It has also been narrated that Abu Ja'far the second (as) was once asked: "Is it possible to say that Allah is a thing?"

He said: "Yes, when excluding Him from the two limits; the limit of *ta'til* (stripping Allah of His attributes) and the limit of *tashbih* (comparison)."¹

3. The narrator says: I asked Imam Abu Ja'far al-Jawad (as): "What is the meaning of the One?"

Imam al-Jawad (as) answered: "It is He whom tongues have agreed on."²

B. Interpretation of the Holy Qur'an

The Holy Qur'an has many dimensions such as the apparent dimension, the hidden aspect and its interpretation "but no one knows its interpretation except Allah and those firmly grounded in knowledge." Certainly, by saying 'those firmly grounded in knowledge,' Allah outlines the Prophets (as) and the Infallible Imams (as). As soon as these great people found deviated people interpreting the Holy Book of Allah, they took it upon themselves to enter this field and reveal the false claims. Like other Infallible Imams (as), there are many explicit interpretational texts from Imam Jawad (as) about some of the verses of the Holy Qur'an.

Among the interpretational discussions of this great Imam (as) is the interpretation of the following two verses of the holy Qur'an:

1. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:118; Al-Saduq, al-Tawhid p. 82/hadith 1.

2. Al-Saduq, Ma'ani al-Akhbar p. 5/hadith 1; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 3:208/hadith 2.

﴿ مَا نَنْسَخْ مِنْ آيَةٍ أَوْ نُنسِهَا نَأْتِ بِخَيْرٍ مِّنْهَا أَوْ مِثْلَهَا ۗ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ ۝ أَلَمْ تَعْلَمْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ لَهُ مُلْكُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ ۚ وَمَا لَكُم مِّن دُونِ اللَّهِ مِن وَلِيٍّ وَلَا نَصِيرٍ ۝ ﴾

*"For any verse that we abrogate or remove from memories, we bring another which is better than it, or similar to it. Do you not know that Allah has power over all things? Do you not know that to Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth? And besides Allah you do not have any guardian or any helper."*¹

Interpreting these two verses of the Holy Qur'an, Imam Jawad (as) said: "for any verse that we abrogate" means that we remove it from amongst the people; and "remove from memories" means that we let it be no longer and make it disappear from the minds and hearts of the people; even from the heart of Muhammad (sawas), because Allah has said addressing the Prophet (sawas):

﴿ سَنُقْرِئُكَ فَلَا تَنْسَىٰ ۚ إِلَّا مَا شَاءَ اللَّهُ ۚ ﴾

*"We shall have you recite [the Qur'an], then you will not forget [any of it], except that which Allah may wish. Indeed, He knows the overt and what is hidden."*²

This verse can be interpreted that if Allah wants it forgotten, He will remove it from people's memory.

The interpretation of the phrase "We bring another which is better than it" is that we replace it with something which is better.

Then Imam Jawad (as) said: 'The second case which replaces the first one is more beneficial for you; and there is a better policy in it for you as compared with the policy of the first one. It means that whatever we replace or remove is for your betterment.

1. Surat al-Baqarah, 2:106-107.

2. Surat al-A'ala, 87: 6-7.

Then Imam (as) said: Allah the Exalted said to Muhammad (sawas): 'Do you not know that Allah has power over all things?' This means that Allah has the power to remove whatever He wishes.'

Then he said: "Do you not know, O Muhammad (peace be upon you), that to Allah belongs the kingdom of the heavens and the earth?" Therefore, this is He who is aware of the interests of everything and this is He who performs the affairs related to you with His knowledge" means that Allah is aware about the interests of His creatures; therefore, it is He who manages your interests.

When He says: "and besides Allah you do not have any guardian or any helper", He is saying here that if Allah puts you in trouble and hardship, no one else will be able to help you."¹

In the above lines, the method which Imam Jawad (as) used for the interpretation of the Holy Book and which was to take assistance from the verses of the holy Book is manifest and clear.

When Imam Jawad (as) was asked about another verse of the holy Qur'an which states:

﴿أَيْنَ مَا تَكُونُوا يَأْتِ بِكُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾

*"Everyone has a cynosure to which he turns; so take the lead in all good works. Wherever you may be, Allah will bring you all together. Indeed Allah has power over all things."*²

Imam (as) answered in detail based on an interpretation of the verse which we will read in the following lines:

Abd al-Adhim bin Abdullah Hasani said: "I said to Muhammad bin Ali bin Musa (as): I hope that you are al-Qa'im of the holy Household (as) after whose appearance the earth is going to be filled with justice after its having been filled with oppression and injustice."

1. Tafsir al-Imam al-'Askari (as), p.491/hadith 311; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 4:104/hadith 118.

2. Surat al-Baqarah, 2:148.

Imam (as) said: " O Abu al-Qasim, every one of us is Qa'im (executor) of the orders of Allah the Almighty and a guide to the religion of Allah, but the Qa'im by whom Allah will purify the earth from the people of unbelief and atheism and who will fill the earth with justice and fairness is he whose birth will be unknown to the people and who will disappear and it will not be permitted for people to call him by his name. His name and surname are like those of the messenger of Allah (sawas). The earth will be submitted to him and every difficulty will be made easy for him. His companions, who will number three hundred and thirteen men, exactly the same number of the men of Badr,¹ will join him from the farthest parts of the world as Allah says: "Wherever you may be, Allah will bring you all together; surely Allah has power over all things." When this number of loyal men join him, Allah will make him appear. And when his other companions come together and "*aqd*" (based on ten thousand people) is provided, he will rise with the permission of Allah and will kill the enemies of Allah in such a way that Allah will become happy."

I asked: "O my master! How will he come to know about the willingness of Allah?"

Imam (as) replied: "God will make his heart kind and when he enters the city of Madinah, he will bring out "*laat*" and "*uzzi*" and will burn them [and then Allah will be pleased with him.]²

C. Imam Jawad (as) and the Propagation of Hadith

A Sahih Hadith with divine origin must be taken as the basic need for one's life, because the Prophet (sawas) of Allah taught his Ummah how to live their lives. The Prophet (sawas) did this in the form of short lines of Hadiths. The Imams (as) had the responsibility of interpreting them and making the people become aware of them. Imam Jawad (as) also played his role in this regard as did his father and forefathers. He narrated a group of traditions from the messenger

1. Badr was a battle between the polytheists and the Prophet (sawas) whose companions in the fighting were three hundred and thirteen men.

2. Shaykh al-Saduq, Kamal al-Din wa Tamam al-Nia'am pp. 377-378; I'htijaj al-Tabarsi 2:481-482/hadith 342.

of Allah through the line of these fathers. He also narrated from his grandfathers Imam Ali (as) and Imam Sadiq (as) and from his father Imam al-Rida (as). We shall now look at some of them.

1. He quoted the messenger of Allah (sawas) as saying: "Fatima has protected her honour and has been abstinent and therefore Allah has protected her and her progeny from the Fire."¹

2. He narrated from the Prophet (sawas): "Man is hidden under his tongue."²

3. Also he narrated: "Once, a man from Basra got up and said to Amir al-Mu'minin: "Would you tell us about brothers?" Imam Ali said: "Brothers are of two kinds; brothers of trust and brothers of smile. As for the brothers of trust, they are like the hand, the wing, the kin and the money to you. If there is trust between you and your brother, you share your money, give him your hand, make friends with his friends, become enemy to his enemy, keep his secrets, support him and reveal his good qualities."³ O asking man, know that brothers of trust are rarer than red sulfur. And as for the brothers of smile, you get pleasure from them. Do not cut your relation with them and do not ask them for more from their consciences. Smile at them and be courteous to them as long as they do the same to you."⁴

4. When Imam Jawad (as) was asked about a pious person in this world, he answered with the following narration of Imam Sadiq (as):

[A pious person] is one who leaves out the *halal* in this world because of being asked for it and the *haram* because of fearing of being punished for it."⁵

1. Al-Irbali, *Kashf al-Ghummah* 3:137; al-Safadi, *al-Wafi bi'l-Wafiat* 4:106; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 75:78/hadith 52.

2. *Amali al-Saduq* p. 532/hadith 718; Shaykh al-Tusi, *al-Amali* p. 494/hadith 1082; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 101:370/hadith 3.

3. *Ibid.*

4. Al-Kulayni, *al-Kafi* 2:248-249/hadith 3; Shaykh al-Saduq, *al-Kisal* 101:370/hadith 3.

5. *Uyun Akhbar al-Ridah* (as) 1:56/hadith 199, 2:279/hadith 81; *Ma'ani al-Akhbar* p. 287/hadith 287, 1.

5. Once Imam Sadiq (as) was asked about death. Imam Jawad (as) replied: For a believer [death] is like a pleasant smell which removes all tiredness and pain from him; while for an infidel, it is like the sting of a snake and scorpion, but rather more painful."¹

6. Imam Jawad (as) is also reported as saying: "One of Imam al-Rida's (as) companions fell ill. Imam (as) went to visit him. Imam (as) asked the man: How are you feeling now?"

The man replied: 'I felt death behind me.'

Imam (as) asked him: 'How was it?'

He said: 'It was very difficult and painful.'

Imam (as) said: "That is not death which you felt, but rather you have just touched and felt something which comes to one before death and it has made you aware of part of the nature of death. [Be aware that regarding death] people fall into two categories: one reaches ultimate peace through death; while the second, by dying, enables people to be free of their cruelty and corruption. Thus, strengthen your faith in Allah and the promise divine guardianship so as to reach the state of peace and tranquillity."²

D. Jurisprudential Traditions from Imam Jawad (as)

The Twelver Shi'a Jurisprudents warmly welcomed the traditions related to Imam Jawad (as) and have used them for the derivation of jurisprudential laws as these traditions are the reflections of the Infallibles' "sayings", "actions" or "keeping silence and agreeing upon some matters." There are many traditions associated with Imam Jawad (as) in this regard. We shall mention a few:

1. Shaykh al-Saduq, 'Ilal al-Shara'i' 1:298/hadith 235; 'Uyun Akhbar al-Ridah(as) 2:248/hadith 9; Shaykh al-Tusi, al-Amali p. 652/hadith 1352; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 6:172/hadith 50.

2. Shaykh al-Saduq, Ma'ani al-Akhbar pp. 289-290; Da'awat al-Rawandi 248/hadith 698.

The prayer

1. The narrator said: "I wrote to Abu Ja'far the second (as) asking him about the (fur of) squirrel, the (fur of) fennec¹ and silk. I said to him: "May I die for you! I like that you do not answer me with *taqiyya* (reservation or dissimulation)." He wrote to me by hand saying to me that I could offer the prayer with them."²

Jurisprudents took this tradition as evidence of the permissibility of prayers being offered with the fur of these animals if slaughtered in the Islamic manner.³

2. The narrator said: "I saw Abu Ja'far (as) offer six *rak'as* behind the Maqam (standing place) of Abraham at midday on the day of Tarwiya (moistening) with his shoes on and he did not take them off."⁴

Jurisprudents have concluded the permissibility of offering prayers wearing pure shoes made from the skins of legally slaughtered animals.⁵

The Zakat (paying alms)

Many traditions were reported from Imam Abu Ja'far (as) about the branches of the *zakat*. Jurisprudents have concluded the permissibility of paying the *zakat* from the price of a certain thing and not necessarily from the thing itself according to the traditions narrated from Imam Abu Ja'far (as). Imam was asked: "Is it possible to pay money for the due *zakat* on wheat, barley and gold or I should pay from each one the due portion?"⁶

Abu Ja'far (as) replied: "That which is easily paid."⁷

1. A fennec is a small animal of the dog family which closely resembles a fox. It has long ears and a total length of forty centimeters including the tail. The animal is known for its fur.

2. Man la yahdhurh al-Faqih 1:170/hadith 804; Al-wasal 4:349.

3. Al-Marasim al-'Alawiah p. 63. Al-khilaf for al-Tawsi 1:63-64.

4. Al-Tahdhib 2:233/hadith 918; al-wasal 4:426/Chapter 37/hadith 6.

5. Muntaha al-Matalib 4:234; al-Hada'iq al-Nadhirah 7:107-108.

6. Al-Tusi, Khilaf 2:50-51; al-Mu'atabar 2:516-517.

7. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 3:559/hadith 1; al-Wasal 9:167/Chapter 14/hadith 1.

The Hajj

Like the rules mentioned above, *hajj* also has certain laws mentioned by Imam Jawad (as). There are also many traditions stemming from Imam Jawad (as) from which the Jurisprudents have benefited while proclaiming fatwas about secondary rules. Here we will mention two of them:

1. Jurisprudents¹ concluded the recommendation of the *hajj* to a young boy from a tradition narrated thus: "I asked Abu Ja'far the second (as) when it would be acceptable for a young boy to go to perform the *hajj* and he said: "When he replaces his milk teeth."
2. Shi'a jurisprudents have agreed that the minor *hajj* is the best kind of *hajj* for one who wants to perform a *mandub* (recommended) *hajj*. They based this on the traditions narrated from Imam al-Jawad (as): "Abu Ja'far (as) often said: "One, who performs the minor *hajj* and goes on to perform the major *hajj*, is better than a single one who leads *al-hadiy*." He also said: "A *hajji* does not enter (into the major *hajj*) with anything better than the minor *hajj*."²

E. Causes of verdicts the philosophy

Imam al-Jawad (as) declared the causes behind the legislation of some verdicts.

Muhammad bin Sulayman asked regarding the cause of the (*iddah*) waiting period of a divorced woman as to why it was for three menstruations or three months whereas the (*iddah*) waiting period of a widow was four months and ten days, and Imam al-Jawad (as) replied: "The (*iddah*) waiting period of a divorced woman is three months so that it will be certain that her womb contains no fetus. But as for the *iddah* of a widow, Allah has put a condition for (the benefit of) women and a condition on them. Allah has determined that it is not permissible for a husband to abstain from (sleeping with) his wife. Allah says:

1. Al-Hadaiq al-Nadhirah 14:258-259; Mustanad al-Shi'a 11:160-161.

2. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 4:291/hadith 5; al-wasal 11:247/Chapter 4/hadith 5.

﴿لِّلَّذِينَ يُؤْلُونَ مِن نِّسَائِهِمْ تَرَبُّصُ أَرْبَعَةِ أَشْهُرٍ﴾

*"Those who swear that they will not enter their wives should wait only four months."*¹

Allah has permitted no one to abstain from sleeping his wife more than four months because He knows that woman cannot be patient for more than this period in this respect. And as for the condition that is on a woman when her husband dies, it is that she has to undergo the *iddah* for four months and ten days. Allah has taken from her on the death of her husband that which He has taken for her from her husband during his life. Allah says:

﴿يَتَرَبَّصْنَ بِأَنفُسِهِنَّ أَرْبَعَةَ أَشْهُرٍ وَعَشْرًا﴾

*"And (as for) those of you who die and leave wives behind, they should keep themselves in waiting for four months and ten days."*²

These ten days have not been mentioned except in connection with the four months. It is known that the limit of patience of women in abstaining from copulation is four months; therefore, Allah has necessitated this period for her."³

4. His Worship

Imam al-Jawad (as) was the truest worshipper of his time, the most reverent to Allah and the sincerest in obeying Him, just as all the pure imams among his forefathers had been, devoting their lives to Allah and having accomplished all that might take them closer to Allah. The forms of his worship were as follows:

A. His Offering Recommended Worships

Imam al-Jawad (as) used to recommend many forms of worship (*nawafil*). Narrators of traditions have reported that he would offer

1. Surat al-Baqarah, 2: 226.

2. Surat al-Baqarah, 2:234.

3. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 6:113/hadith 1; Al-wasal 22:235-236.

two *rak'as* (units of prayer), in each of which he would recite the sura of al-Fatiha and the sura of *al-Ikhlaas* seventy times.¹ On the first day of a new month, Imam Jawad (as) offered two *rak'as*: in the first *rak'at* he would recite sura al-Fatiha once and *sura al-Ikhlaas* thirty times. In the second *rak'at*, he would recite *sura al-Fatihah* once and *sura al-Qadr* thirty times. Then he would offer a vow and charity and in this way bought good health for himself through the month. It is said: "When Abu Ja'far the second was in Baghdad, he fasted in the middle and on the twenty-seventh of Rajab and all his servants fasted with him. He ordered us to offer a prayer that was twelve *rak'ats*. In each *rak'at* we had to recite *sura al-Fatihah* and another *sura*, and when we finished the prayer, we recited the suras of *al-Fatiha*, *al-Ikhlaas*, *al-Falaq* and *al-Naas* four times each, and 'la ilaha illallahu wallahu akbar, subhanallah wa al-hamdulillah, wa la hawla wa la quwwata illabillah al-alii al-adhim' four times."²

B. His hajj

Imam Abu Ja'far al-Jawad (as) performed the *hajj* many times. There is a tradition in which the narrator tells us: "I saw Abu Ja'far the second (as) in 254 AH bid farewell to the House (the *Ka'aba*); he circumambulated the House and kissed the Yemeni Corner at every turn. At the seventh turn, he kissed the corner and the Black stone and rubbed his hand (over the stone) and then rubbed his face with his hand. Then he came to the Temple (of Abraham) and offered a prayer of two *Rak'ats* behind it. He went to the back of the *Ka'aba*, removed his clothing from his chest and remained a long while supplicating Allah. He then went out through the gate of *al-Hannatin* and departed."

The narrator says: "In 219 AH I saw him bid farewell to the House at night. He kissed the Yemeni Corner and the Black Rock at every turn. At the seventh turn, he went to the back of the *Ka'aba* near the Yemeni Corner and on the rectangular rock. He removed his robe

1. Ibn Tawus, *Jamal al-Isbu'* ap p. 278; *al-wasal* 8:185.

2. Shaykh al-Tusi, *Musbah al-Tahajud* p. 523; *Da'awat al-Rawandi* p. 106/hadith 234.

from his abdomen, kissed the rock and rubbed it. He went to the Temple, offered a prayer behind it and then he left and did not come back to the House. He remained at the back wall (*al-Multazam*) of the Ka'aba during the period of circumambulation of some of our companions who circumambulated seven or eight turns."¹

C. His Supplications

Supplications and ritual prayers have great status and importance in Islamic culture, especially the culture of Ahl al-Bayt (as). In the school of thought of Ahl al-Bayt ritual prayers are not only supplications but they are filled with great knowledge, showing that man is nothing before God's power and is only a pauper in His court. Imam al-Jawad (as) had many supplications showing the extent of his devotion to Allah the Almighty. From his supplications we shall only mention a few as follows:

"O, Lord, You are the First without being classified under a numeric category, and the Last without being restricted in a limiting end, You have created us without being forced or compelled to do so, and have brought us into being without having any need of us, and have willingly invented us according to Your wisdom, but then have texted us with Your commands and prohibition. You have equipped us with tools, given us gifts of organs, and you have ordered us to adhere to Your orders and commands, as You ordered after having left us free, forbidding us from doing prohibited acts to warn us [from committing bad things]. Indeed You have given so much, and asked for so little, yet when Your orders are violated, You are patient, as when Your elevated status is ignored, even though You were generous."²

Some of his Supplications after having Performed Prayers

"I've accepted Almighty Allah as My Lord, and Islam as my religion, and the Qur'an as my Holy book, and Muhammad (sawas) as my Holy Prophet, and Ali (as) as my Imam, and al-Hasan, al-Husayn, Ali bin al-Husayn, Muhammad bin Ali, Ja'far bin Muhammad, Musa bin

1. Life of Imam Jawad (as) p. 68.

2. Muhaj al-Daawat pp. 80-81; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 82:225/hadith 1/S. 33.

Ja'far, Ali bin Musa, Muhammad bin Ali, Ali bin Muhammad, al-Hasan bin Ali and al-Hujjah bin Hasan bin Ali (as), as my Imams.

O, Lord, Your Wali is al-Hujjah (as), as he is your perfect sign, so please protect him from all different kind of evils, prolong his life, and make him - he, who will struggle to win for Your religion - victorious with Your command, and show him what he desires so that he will be content with Your bounties, and be proud of his achievement and be honoured amongst his family members, his progeny, his family, his enemies as well as his followers. O, Lord, show him what he loves to see from them, and make him proud and satisfied with them, and make us and other believers satisfied with his achievements!"¹

Some of his Supplications in the Morning and Evening and for the Fulfilment of Anything Desired

The narrator says: "I wrote to Imam Jawad (as) asking him for a prayer. Imam al-Jawad (as) wrote to me: "In the morning and in the evening say: "Allah, Allah, Allah is my Lord, the Beneficent, the Merciful. I do not associate anything with Him" and if you add more to this, it will be good for you. Supplicate Allah with this to satisfy your need because everything is by the will of Allah the Almighty and Allah does whatever He likes."²

5. His Miracles

Imam Jawad's (as) life was an undeniable miracle of God; because he took the responsibility of Imamah and leadership of the Muslim Ummah at a time when he was only seven years old. Naturally to some groups of ignorant people this was not acceptable. Therefore it was necessary for the Imam (as) to show something miraculous so that their doubts about his Imamah and leadership were assuaged. That is why on various occasions Allah allowed Imam (as) to perform various miracles so that he could indicate the Proof of God to the

1. Man la Yahdharh al-Faqih 1:327/hadith 960; Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 2:548/hadith 6.

2. Ibid p. 318.

people. Allah wanted to make his friends happy and his enemies dumb. Here we shall mention a few of these miracles:

1. Abu Hashim Dawud bin Qasim Ja'fari narrates: "Once I went to Abu Ja'far (as) and I had three charters with me that was not signed with any name. I was uncertain whose ones they were and so I was distressed. He (Abu Ja'far) took one of them and said: "This is Raian bin Shabib's" and took the other and said: this is Muhammad bin Hamzah's" and when taking the third one he said: "this is of so-and-so." I was astonished. He looked at me and smiled.

Abu Hashim continues: Abu Ja'far (as) gave me a sack with three hundred dinars in it and ordered me to give it to one of his cousins. Then he said: "He will say: Tell me about any trader who will buy something for me with this money."

I took the sack of dinars to him and he said to me: "O Abu Hashim! Tell me about any trader who will buy something for me with this money. And I did so."¹

Abu Hashim is quoted as saying: "A cameleer asked me to ask Imam Jawad (as) to give him work. I went to Imam (as) for the same purpose. When I went there I found him eating food with some other people. Therefore I was unable to mention the cameleer's request. Imam (as) asked me to join them and eat some food.

Without saying anything further, he said to his slave: "O slave! Give some work to the cameleer whom Abu Hashim has brought to us."

2. Abu Hashim also says: One day I entered a garden with him. I said: "May I die for you! I am prepared to eat clay. Would you please pray to Allah for me?" He kept silent. Three days later, he said to me: "O

1. Shaykh al-Mufid, *Kitab al-Irshad* 2:293-294; al-Tabarsi, *I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda* 2:98; Qutb al-Din al-Rawandi, *al-Khara'ij wa'l-Jara'ih*, 2:264-265/hadith 1.

Abu Hashim, Allah has taken the eating of clay away from you.' After that, eating clay became too disgusting to me.¹

3. Ali bin Asbat says: "Abu Ja'far appeared among us immediately after his father's death. We looked at him so that we could observe his visage and tell others about it. He sat down and said: "O Ali! As Allah has said as the last ultimatum in the case of the prophethood:

﴿وَأَتَيْنَهُ الْحُكْمَ صَبِيًّا﴾

*"And we blessed him with prophethood and sufficient talent in his childhood."*²

Also He has given His final ultimatum in the Imamah."³

4. It has been narrated: "When Abu al-Hasan al-Rida (as) left the world, I wanted four thousand dirhams from him (as I had lent these to him) and I alone knew this. However, Abu Ja'far sent someone and called me to come to him the next day.

The next day I went to him and he said to me: Abu al-Hasan (as) has left the world and you want four thousand dirhams from him.

I said: yes.

There was a rug. He lifted one side of it and withdrew some money. I counted this and it was exactly four thousand dirhams."⁴

5. Also he is quoted as saying: "I was in Madinah; and always had contact with Abu Ja'far [in Madinah] as well as with Abu al-Hasan (as) in Khurasan. The members of the family and uncles of the Abu

1. Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:294; al-Tabarsi, I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda 2:98; Qutb al-Din al-Rawandi, al-Khara'ij wa'l-Jara'ih 2:665/hadith 4; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:42/hadith 7.

2. *Surat Maryam, 19:12.*

3. Muhammad ibn al-Hassan al-Saffar, Basa'ir al-Darajat p. 258/hadith 10; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:37/hadith 1.

4. Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 1:497; Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:292; Rawdat al-Wa'adhin p. 243; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:54/hadith 32.

Ja'far's father went to see him and paid their regards to him. One day Abu Ja'far (as) called his slave girl and said to her: "Tell them to prepare for mourning."

When Imam's (as) relatives left the gathering, I said to myself: It would be better if I had asked him, 'Whom should we mourn?'

The narrator continues: The next day when they gathered around Imam (as), he said the same words. They asked him: Whose mourning is this?

Abu Ja'far (as) said: "This mourning is for the best creature of Allah on the surface of the earth."

After some days, we received the news regarding Abu al-Hasan al-Rida (as) from Khurasan.

According to the courier, the day of Imam al-Rida's (as) martyrdom was the same day on which Imam Jawad (as) had asked his companions to mourn for Imam al-Rida (as).¹

6. It has been narrated: "Abu Ja'far wrote to me: "Bring me the *khums*. I shall take this from you only this year." It was shortly after that that Allah took him to be near Him." ²

6. His Asceticism and Great Social Attitudes

Imam Jawad was a young man to whom al-Mamun paid much attention. Al-Mamun had given him a property of about one million Dirhams. On the other hand, the Shi'a had a strong belief in his Imamah and sent their religious dues to him. The properties coming from Qum and other places were completely under the authority of Imam Jawad (as). However he did not spend any of this property for his personal affairs but distributed it among the hopeless, the needy and the deprived.

Husayn al-Mukari saw Imam Jawad (as) in Baghdad while he was surrounded by honour and glorification in the official and public

1. Al-Tabarsi, *Ilam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda* 2:100; Ibn Shahr'ashub, *al-Manaqib* 4:389; *Bihar al-Anwar* 50: 63/hadith 42.

2. *Ibid*.

milieus. He thought to himself that Imam Jawad (as) would not go back to his homeland in Yathrib and he would reside in Baghdad where he lived in ease and luxury. Imam Jawad (as) knew Husayn's intention and so he went to him and said: "O Husayn, the bread of barley and the ground salt in the sanctum (Madinah) of my grandfather, the messenger of Allah, is more beloved to me than where you see me now."¹

Imam Jawad (as) did not like the position of luxury and ease the state had given to him. He was like his forefathers who had cast aside a worldly life and turned towards Allah, thinking of no other than Him. We will now mention some of his qualities:

A. His Generosity

Imam Abu Ja'far (as) was a most generous and open-handed person. He was called Jawad (the generous) because of his excessive generosity, open-handedness, charity and kindness to people. Historians have mentioned many examples of his generosity such as:

One year, Ahmad bin Hadid and some of his companions set out to perform the *hajj*. On their way, some robbers attacked them and robbed them of all the monies and luggage they had. When they arrived in Yathrib, Ahmad bin Hadid went to Imam Jawad (as) and told him what had happened to him and to his companions. Imam Jawad (as) gave him some clothes and a sum of money to be distributed among his companions. This sum of money was as much as that which had been robbed from them.²

Imam al-Jawad (as) had saved them from their distress and recompensed them for what had been taken from them.

1. Qutb al-Din al-Rawandi, *al-Khara'ij wa al-Jara'ih* 2:383/hadith 11; *Madinah al-Ma'azij* 7:376/hadith 2384; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 50:48/hadith 26.

2. Qutb al-Din al-Rawandi, *al-Khara'ij wa'l-Jara'ih* 2:662-669/hadith 11; *Al-Sirat al-Mustaqim* 2:201/hadith 15; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 50:44/hadith 14.

According to historical accounts regarding the generosity of Imam al-Jawad (as) his charity even extended to animals.

Muhammad bin al-Walid al-Kirmani narrated: "One day, I had a meal with Abu Ja'far the second (as). When I finished eating and the dishes were removed, the servant went to pick up the crumbs that were on the ground. Abu Ja'far (as) said to him: "Leave whatever lies in the desert even if it is a leg of a sheep, and pick up what is on the floor inside the house!"¹

Imam Jawad (as) ordered his servant to leave the food that was in the desert for the birds and beasts.

B. Being Benevolent

Being benevolent and merciful to people was another prominent quality of Imam al-Jawad (as). Historians have mentioned many stories about his benevolence, and we mention some here:

Ahmad bin Zakariyya al-Saydalani narrated that a man from the people of "Bust" or from Sajistan² had said, "I accompanied Abu Ja'far in the year when he went to perform the hajj at the beginning of the rule of al-Mu'tasim. I said to him when we were at the meal: "May I die for you! Our wali believes in you and loves you. There is a land tax I must pay to his diwan. If you please, may I die for you, will you write to him telling him to be kind to me."

1. Man la Yahdhurh al-Faqih 3:225/hadith 1054; Qutb al-Din al-Rawandi, al-Khara'ij wa'l-Jara'ih 1:389/hadith 17; Wasail al-Shi'ah 6:499; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:87/hadith 3.

2. Muhammad bin Bahr Rahani said of Sajistan: Sajistan is a western city and a resistant place. It has extraordinarily good qualities. Some of its qualities and specialties cannot be found anywhere else in the world. Its traders surpass the most honest traders in the world. At a time when everywhere on minbar Ali (as) was abused, only once was he (as) abused in this city and the people rose against Bani Umayyah for this. Finally they were compelled to announce that no one would be abused in such gatherings. How did they do this and stop Bani Umayyah from abusing Imam Ali (as) at a time where he (as) was abused even in Mecca and Medina? (Ma'jam al-baladan 3:190-191).

He said: "I do not know him." I said: "May I die for you! He is one of your admirers and followers and your letter to him will benefit me."

Imam al-Jawad (as) responded and wrote this letter: "In the name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. The bearer of my letter has mentioned your belief. You will not be rewarded for your deeds except those which you do correctly. Do good to your brothers and know that Allah the Almighty will ask you about everything even to the weight of an atom and a mustard seed."

When the man went back to Sajistan, he found that the wali al-Husayn bin Abdullah al-Nayshaburi, who knew about the letter that Imam al-Jawad (as) had sent him had come to receive him from two leagues away. The wali took the letter and kissed it. He considered it as an honour to him. He asked the man about his need and the man told him. He said to the man: "Do not give me any tax as long as I am in my position." Then he asked him about his family and children to know their number and then he gave them presents. The man did not pay the tax as long as the wali was alive, and the wali did not stop giving him gifts.¹

This story is just an example of Imam's (as) blessings and good actions.

C. His Comforting the People

Imam Jawad (as) continued the way of his father and forefathers (as). He possessed all their good qualities. Like them, he also helped the people in their troubles and tried to comfort them. There is a historical saying: Ibrahim bin Muhammad al-Hamadani had received a grievance from the wali and he wrote to Imam al-Jawad (as) telling him about what had happened to him. Imam al-Jawad (as) felt pain and replied to him in a letter: "May Allah hasten your victory over him, who has wronged you, and save you from his burden (troubles).

1. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 5:111-112/hadith 6; al-Siraj al-Wahaj pp. 122-123; Wasail al-Shi'ah 17:195-196; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:86-87/hadith 2.

Be certain that the help of Allah will come soon inshallah and the good afterlife will be yours and praise Allah very much."¹

He often comforted afflicted and distressed people. Once he sent a letter to a man who had been afflicted by the death of his son. He said in the letter: "In the Name of Allah, the Beneficent, the Merciful. You mentioned your distress on losing your son and mentioned that he was the most beloved of your children. Thus when Allah the Almighty takes a child he takes the purest one in the family, so that the reward of the afflicted ones is increased. May Allah increase your reward, comfort you and strengthen your heart, He is Mighty and Powerful. May Allah give you a descendant soon and I hope that He has done so inshallah."²

This emotional letter showed the extent of the sympathy of Imam al-Jawad (as) towards people and his comfort in their joys and sorrows.

Also it is narrated about him that "a man of the Shi'a wrote to Imam al-Jawad (as) bemoaning the pain and sorrow that occupied him after the death of his son and the Imam replied to him in a letter of comfort saying:

"Did you not know that Allah the Almighty chooses from the properties and the children of a believer the most precious ones to reward him in return?"³

Imam al-Jawad (as) participated with people in their joy and distress comforted them in their misfortunes and disasters and helped the poor and the weak. Through this benevolence and charity Imam al-Jawad (as) occupied the hearts and made people love him and be sincere to him in the fullest sense of the word.

Imam al-Jawad (as) was one of the most wonderful examples of virtue and perfection on earth. People had never before seen his equal

1. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:108/hadith 29; Rijal al-Kashi p. 611/hadith 1135.

2. Wasail al-Shi'ah 3:218, Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 3:205.

3. Wasail al-Shi'ah 3:243, Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 3:218; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 79:23/hadith 18.

in knowledge, piety, devotion and godliness. He was unique in his virtues and morals which were the secret of his Imamah.

The Islamic circles admired Imam al-Jawad (as) and wondered at his talents and intellectual and scientific abilities which were infinite. These talents and abilities confirmed the faith and certainty of the Shi'a and their belief that the Imam must be the most aware, most knowledgeable, most virtuous and most pious of the people of his time.¹

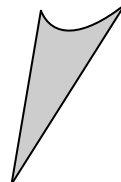
1. Hayat al-Imam Muhammad al-Jawad (as) pp. 70-75.

SECTION TWO

Chapter One
Imam Jawad's (as) upbringing

Chapter Two
The Stages of Imam Jawad's (as) life

Chapter Three
Imam Jawad (as) under the wing of his father (as)



CHAPTER ONE

IMAM JAWAD'S (AS) UPBRINGING

1. Imam Jawad (as) was from the Prophet's family, which was the holiest, most honourable family that humanity has ever known throughout the ages. He filled the world with his blessings. His father was Imam Ali al-Rida bin Imam Musa bin Ja'far al-Kadhim bin Imam Muhammad al-Baqir bin Imam Ali Zayn al-'Abidin bin Imam al-Husayn bin Imam Ali bin Abi Talib (as).

2. His mother was from Maria al-Qubtiyyah and was from the people of 'Nawba.' Her name was 'Sabikah,' 'Rayhanah.' According to tradition her name was 'Durrah.' However, Imam Al-Rida (as) gave her the name of 'Khayzuran.'¹

The Prophet of Allah (sawas) referred to her as 'the best and purest handmaiden.'² Imam Hassan Askari (as) said of her: She is Umm Walad and she was created very pure. She is known as "Umm al-Jawad" and "Umm al-Hasan" and she is amongst the best women of her time."³

3. Imam Jawad (as) was born on the tenth day of Ramadan, 195 AH. According to some other traditions he was born in the middle of the same month in Madinah.⁴

Waves of delight and joy overcame Imam al-Rida (as) after the birth of his blessed newborn son. He began by saying:

The one who has been born is like Moses, son of Imran, the splitter of the seas, and the like of Jesus, son of Mary, blessed be the mother that bore him.¹

1. Ibn Shahr'ashub, al-Manaqib 4:378-379.

2. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:323/hadith 14; Rawdhat al-Wa'adhin 266; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:21/hadith 7.

3. Uyun al-Mu'ajizat p. 121; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:15/hadith 20.

4. Al-Tabarsi, Taj al-Mawalid p. 101.

4. Imam Muhammad al-Jawad (as) had the nickname of Abu Ja'far, like the surname of his grandfather Imam Muhammad al-Baqir (as).² They can be differentiated between by saying Abu Ja'far the first for Imam al-Baqir (as) and Abu Ja'far the second for Imam al-Jawad (as). The author of 'Dala'il al-Imamah' believes that Abu Ali al-Khas was also an epithet of his. However, later researchers of the epithets of Imam Jawad (as) have said: He has a certain epithet which is Abu Ali; it is not Abu Ali al-Khas as stated in the book 'Dala'il al-Imamah' like his forefathers (as).³

5. Imam Jawad (as) had some epithets which show his great personality and exalted self. The most common are as follows:

A. Al-Jawad (the generous): he was thus called because of his abundant acts of good, beneficence and charity towards the people.

B. Al-Taqi (the pious): he was thus called because he feared Allah and turned and resorted to Him. He never responded to any incitement of desire or fancy.

C. Al-Qani' (the satisfied).

D. Al-Murtadha (being satisfied with).

E. Al-Radhi (the satisfied).

F. Al-Mukhtar (the elect).

G. Bab al-Murad (the gate of desires and hopes).⁴

He had written on his ring (as his own seal) 'Glory is (only) to Allah' which shows that he had devoted himself to Allah.⁵

1. Uyun al-Mu'ajizat, p. 121, Madinah al-Ma'ajiz 7:399/hadith 2408; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:15/hadith 20.

2. Matalib al-Suoul 2:140, Al-Irbali, Kashf al-Ghummah 3:133.

3. Muhammad ibn Jarir al-Tabari, Dala'il al-Imamah, p. 396.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

CHAPTER TWO

THE STAGES OF IMAM JAWAD'S (AS) LIFE

In 195 A.H. the people swore their allegiance to al-Mamun as the new caliph. This is also the year in which Imam Jawad (as) was born.¹ This noble newborn baby lived under the wing of his father for seven years.² In these years, he observed how people swore their allegiance to his father Imam al-Rida (as) as the crown successor to al-Mamun. He also saw the events occurring at the time of allegiance and those which followed. Moreover, he felt the pain of the martyrdom of his father (as) in the cruel hands of al-Mamun.

When Imam al-Rida (as) was martyred, people started blaming al-Mamun for Imam's (as) martyrdom. This protected the Imam (as) from the cunning and conspiracy of al-Mamun. However, al-Mamun did not miss even a single chance by which he could benefit from insulting Imam (as) and decreasing the love for him in the hearts of the people. Imam Jawad (as) nullified al-Mamun's every destructive attempt and strengthened the Imams' (as) school of thought. In this way, he strengthened the Shia beliefs regarding Imamah, leadership and political and social achievements.

In the year 218 A.H.³ the rule of al-Mamun ceased on his death and his brother Mu'tasim took charge of the caliphate. His rule lasted till 227 A.H.⁴ He kept a sharp eye on Imam Jawad's (as) activities and tried to stop him from social and political interaction. At last, in 220

1. Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:273; al-Tabarsi, I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda 2:91.

2. Ibn Shahr'ashub, al-Manaqib 4:379.

3. Tarikh al-Tabari 7:210.

4. Ibid p. 223.

A.H.¹ with the help of his niece 'Umm al-Fadhl' who was married to Imam Jawad (as), he was successful in poisoning the Imam (as). Imam (as) had no children by 'Umm al-Fadhl.' In this way, Mu'tasim martyred Imam Abu Ja'far Muhammad Jawad (as).

The life of Imam Jawad (as) can be divided into two phases:

The First Phase: This is a period of almost seven years in which Imam Jawad (as) lived under the wings of his father Imam al-Rida (as).

The Second Phase: This phase lasted almost seventeen years, after the martyrdom of Imam al-Rida (as).

This phase of Imam Jawad's (as) life is divided into two subdivisions as follows:

A. Fifteen years of his life were spent in the time of al-Mamun which can be called the longest phase of Imam Jawad's (as) short life.

B. Two years of Imam Jawad's (as) life were spent under Mu'tasim's rule.

Therefore, the life of Imam Jawad (as) can be explained within the following three separate periods:

1. From his birth (195 A.H.) during the government of Muhammad al-Amin Abbasi till the martyrdom of Imam Al-Rida (as) (in the month of Safar 203 A.H).²
2. A period of fifteen years of his life in the reign of al-Mamun Abbasi from 203 A.H. to 218 A.H.
3. The two years of his life which he spent under the rule of Mu'tasim (from 218 to 220 A.H.)

1. Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:289; Ibn Shahr'ashub, al-Manaqib 4:280-284.

2. Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:247; I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda 2, p 41.

CHAPTER THREE

IMAM JAWAD (AS) UNDER THE WING OF HIS FATHER (AS)

At first, the Abbasid government only propagated in favour of the Alawis but later they started calling the people towards the people of the Household of the Prophet (sawas). After that, they invited the people towards 'the satisfactory person from the progeny of Muhammad (sawas).' This became the reason for the establishment of their government. Moreover, they considered they deserved the caliphate because they were the cousins of the Prophet (sawas). In fact, they used their relationship to the Prophet (sawas) as a tool and built their government on it.

Certainly, the only threat for the Abbasids came in the form of their Alawi cousins, because they had stronger reasons and were closer in relation to the Prophet (sawas). Among the Alawis, there were more people who had the ability of caliphate among Abbasids. They were the people with the necessary standards for the post of caliphate such as wisdom, knowledge and foresight in the fields of religion and politics. In addition to that, the people had a great respect for the Alawis which was not because they feared them as they did the Abbasids but was because of their pure love for them.

On the other hand, the heroes of Islam were all from the progeny of Abu Talib. Abu Talib had been the guardian of the Prophet (sawas), Imam Ali (as) was the Prophet's (sawas) successor, his sons Imam Hasan (as) and Imam Husayn (as) and each of the Imams (as) coming after them had been the administrators and successors of the Prophet (sawas) in their period of Imamah. Therefore, the claim of the Alawis for the post of the caliphate was completely acceptable.

From the very first moment of their caliphate, the Abbasid caliphs were aware of the increasing influence of the Alawis. The following event shows their fear of the Alawis more clearly: When Saffah came to power, he hired some men and sent them among the sons and grandsons of Imam Hassan (as) as spies so that they would report to him about each and every activity performed by the sons and

grandsons of Imam Hasan (as). When a panel of Imam Hasan's (as) sons and grandsons went out after meeting him, Saffah said to one of his reliable men: Stand up and give them a place to sit. Try to be good to them. Whenever you are with them in secret, make them believe that your inclination is to be on their side. Say bad things about us and our ruling system. Make them believe that they are more suitable and appropriate for the post of caliphate. Then see what they do and what they say; and inform us about their moves.¹

They had seriously felt the threat from the Alawis which was making them and their government afraid. They observed how the people were showing their inclination towards them and how they were joining their side. Therefore, the Abbasid caliphs considered it essential to rise up against this threat which was increasing by the day.

The Behaviour of Abbasids towards the People

In this short work we shall not attempt to count the number of oppressions which the Abbasid government imposed on the people, because it would be too time-consuming. Here we would just like to point out some examples of cruelty by Bani Abbas toward the people such as bad manners, pressure and oppression. These were the things which they feared would become publicly known. Abu al-Ata Sindi who died in 180 A.H sketched the oppression of Bani Abbas in the following verse: would that the oppression of Bani Marwan were gone forever from us; and would that the justice of Bani Abbas were burned in the fire.²

The hopes of Muslims were dashed when the Abbasids assumed leadership of the nation. The violence of al-Mansur and al-Rashid and their greed, and the oppression from the sons of Ali bin Isa and their playing with the wealth of the Muslims reminds us of al-Hajjaj, Hisham, and Yusuf bin Umar al-Thaqafi. Resentment spread among all people after Abdullah al-Saffah and also al-Mansur had begun

1. Al-Hayat al-Siyasiah lil Imam Al-Rida (as) p. 66.

2. Al-Hayat al-Siyasiah lil Imam Al-Rida (as) pp. 96-108.

their rule by shedding Muslims' blood so excessively in a way that had not been seen before.¹

According to the historians, Abu al-Abbas Fattah ordered the death penalty for the people without further thought. His officials all over the country and during the period of his rule followed his methods. Muhammad bin Ash'as (the governor of western part of the country), Salih bin Ali (the governor of Egypt), Khazim bin Khuzayma and Hamid bin Qahtaba can be named in this regard.²

Abu Ja'far al-Mansur would hang the people head downwards unless they agreed to pay their taxes or the dues which had been fixed for them.³ According to some historians he was treacherous and cunning. He shed the blood of the people without any hesitation. He was very cruel. His cruel behaviour towards the sons of Ali (as) is the worst behaviour ever in the history of Abbasid rulers.⁴

Hadi was another Abbasid caliph. He drank wine, loved entertainment and singing gatherings, and was cruel, very rude and a gambler.⁵

According to historians, Harun Rashid was just like Mansur, except that Mansur was a miser but he gave money freely to the people he chose. The other Abbasid caliphs were the same and nothing new or positive could be seen under their rule either.⁶

We can understand the specialties and ethical qualities of Bani Abbas in a better manner after we read the letter written by al-Mamun to his brothers in Baghdad. When he was in Marv, he wrote to his brothers saying:

“You all amuse yourselves (and deceive yourselves). Ignorance and foolishness have captured your minds. Each of you is a singer or a

1. Ibid pp. 108-109.

2. Tarikh al-Khulafa p. 259.

3. Al-Mahasin wa al-Masawa pp. 339.

4. Mukhtasar Tarikh al-Arab wa al-Tamaddun al-Islami p. 184.

5. Tarikh al-Khamis 2:331.

6. Tarikh al-Khulafa p. 285; Tarikh al-Khamis p. 331.

drumbeater. I swear by Allah, that if Bani Ummayah were to return to life those killed in the recent past, and they were asked to do whatever shameful thing they could think of, certainly they would not be able to do more than what you are doing right now.

Each of you becomes anxious when you become hungry. When something good comes to you, you reject it. You do not despise any bad and unpleasant deed. If you refuse to perform some action, it is only because you fear performing it. As for a person who passes his nights becoming a ride for another person and when the day appears becomes as happy as if he has earned some virtues and good qualities, how can he stop and become ashamed of performing any worse action? [And you are the symbol of such a person]. Your only target is to fill up your stomachs and fulfil your sensual and sexual desires. You would not fear or feel ashamed of killing one thousand prophets or angels if you find it necessary for the satisfaction of your sexual desires. The most favoured person in your eyes is one who presents your sins beautifully before your eyes and assists you in your hateful activities."¹

The Political Conditions

When we see the role and activities of the Imams (as) and when we observe their motives, we will find that there was no change in their mission and all of them had the same things to do. It is necessary for us to understand the political situation in Imam Jawad's (as) time, if we wish to understand the role which he played in bringing conditions on the right path of Islam and for the betterment of the Muslims. Therefore, it is essential to familiarize ourselves with the political conditions of Imam Jawad (as) and we must collect as much information as possible about him when he was under wings of his father.

As we have already mentioned, Imam Jawad (as) was a contemporary of the two caliphs: al-Mamun and Mu'tasim. Each of the two caliphs had his own style and method of ruling. However, both of them

1. Taraif Ibn Tawus pp. 281-282. al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 49:214; Al-Hayat al-Siyasiah lil Imam al-Rida (as) pp. 646.

continued the way of their forefathers in snatching the leadership of the Muslims and they were the same in conspiring against the Muslims (as) and Imams.

Under these conditions, Imam Jawad (as) was a contemporary of al-Amin and al-Mamun in the days before his caliphate; while he passed his days of Imamah in the reign of al-Mamun and Mu'tasim: the two Abbasid caliphs and the two sons of Harun al-Rashid.

To become aware of the specialties of the first stage of Imam Jawad's (as) life, we must first study the main political events of his time. It is necessary for us to collect information about these events and their negative social, religious and economical influences on the Islamic Ummah in general and on the Islamic Government in particular. These events can be studied under three categories as follows:

- The sedition between al-Amin and al-Mamun;
- Inclinations, positioning and politics of al-Amin;
- Inclinations, positioning and politics of al-Mamun.

Perhaps one of the most prominent events at the age of Imam al-Jawad (as) was the great sedition that had taken place between al-Amin and al-Mamun. We will discuss about it and its branches first. This sedition caused a war between them and cost the Muslims too much blood and property loss just because each of them wanted to be caliph.

Before we discuss these events, we refer, in brief, to some aspects of al-Amin, and al-Mamun and then we will look at how al-Harun provided the ground for this sedition. He pronounced his sons; al-Amin, al-Mamun and al-Mu'tamin ¹to be successors one by one. On the other hand, he left an inheritance of a great amount of money and wealth for them, which provided them with the opportunity to compete with each other for the post of caliphate. Each of the brothers attempted to kill his brothers and take the charge of the post of caliphate for his own.

1. Al-Mas'udi, Muruj al-Dhahab 3:353-354; Tarikh al-Khulafa p. 290.

The Inclinations, Positioning and Politics of al-Amin

Al-Amin had no good quality that might make him suited to this important position in Islam, the caliphate. Historians were unanimous that he had no virtues. Al-Rashid, his father, had entrusted him with the caliphate due to the influence of his wife, Lady Zubayda. We shall now consider his character:

1. Al-Amin disliked knowledge and despised the ulama. He was illiterate, unable to read or write.¹ Since this was his condition, he tried to insult the ulama.

2. He was weak-willed. He had been entrusted with rule over the vast state and could not manage his affairs or become successful in his policies. Al-Mas'udi, the historian, says of him: "He was of bad morals, and unintelligent. He followed his fancies, ignored his serious affairs, relied on others in important matters, and trusted disloyal persons."²

He was also described thus: "Vice was so easy to him that he followed his fancy and desires and did not think of his end. He was very stingy with food and did not care when he would sit or with whom he would drink."³

There is no doubt that good thinking and intelligence are essential qualities for one who rules over the Muslims.

3. He hid himself from the public, from his family, his emirs and officials and despised them. He turned to amusement and singing and entrusted the affairs of his state to his vizier al-Fadhl bin al-Rabi' who acted according to his desires and tendencies.⁴

Isma'il bin Subayh, was a favourite of al-Amin and on seeing the behaviour of al-Fadhl went to al-Amin and said to him: "O Amir al-Muminin, your leaders, soldiers and your subjects have begun to

1. Al-Suluk li Ma'arifat Duwal al-Muluk (the way to know the states of kings) by al-Maqrizi 1:16.

2. Al-Tanbih wa al-Ishraf p. 318.

3. 'Uyun al- Tawrikh 3:212.

4. Samt al-Nujum 3:433.

mistrust and doubt you. You may sit for some time in a meeting and let them come to you because this will calm them down and make them give up their illusions."

Al-Amin responded to him and sat in his royal court. Poets came and recited their poems. Then he went to al-Khuraqah and left to al-Shamasia. Knights on their horses stopped in rows at the banks of the Tigris. Foods and treasures were carried with him.

Certainly, this story shows the extent of al-Amin's spending his time in pleasures and fulfilment of lust and paying no attention to the affairs of the Islamic state.

4. Love of coming into power was another quality of al-Amin who assumed the caliphate on the day when his father al-Rashid died. When everything became stable, he deposed his brother al-Mamun and made his son, who was a baby in the cradle, his heir apparent and called him al-Natiq bil Haqq. He sent to the Ka'ba a messenger to fetch him the book of the covenant which his father had hung in the Ka'ba and in which he had written that the position of the heir apparent would be for al-Mamun after al-Amin. When the covenant was brought to him, he tore it up.¹

Destructive Wars

When al-Amin deposed his brother al-Mamun from the position of heir apparent and informed him officially of that, he appointed Ali bin Isa to lead an army against al-Mamun. He gave him bands of gold and said to him: "Tie al-Mamun and do not kill him until you bring him alive to me." He gave him two million dinars. When al-Mamun came to know of this, he pronounced himself to be Amir al-Mu'minin. He stopped sending the land tax to al-Amin, removed his name from the flag and from the dirhams and dinars, and announced his disobedience. He appointed Tahir bin al-Husayn and Harthamah bin A'yun at the head of an army to fight against al-Amin. The two armies met in al-Ray in a violent war where rivers of bloods were shed. Finally, the army of al-Mamun won the battle and the leader of

1. Samt al-Nujum 3:428.

al-Amin's army was killed and all their baggage and weapons were taken. Tahir bin al-Husayn wrote to al-Fadhl bin Sahl, the vizier of al-Mamun, informing him of this victory. He said in his letter: "I write to you while the head of Ali bin Isa is in my lap and his ring is in my hand, and praise be to Allah the Lord of the world."

Al-Fadhl bin Sahl came to al-Mamun, greeted him and pronounced him the caliph. He told him about the victory of his army. When al-Mamun was certain of victory, he sent gifts and money to Tahir, the general leader of his army, thanked him repeatedly, and called him 'Dha al-yaminayn' and 'Sahib Khayr al-yadayn'. Then he ordered him to march to occupy Iraq and do away with his brother al-Amin.¹

The armies of al-Mamun moved to occupy Baghdad under the leadership of Tahir bin al-Husayn. They blockaded Baghdad and the blockade lasted for a long time until the signs of civilization in Baghdad were destroyed, poverty and wretchedness prevailed, and criminals and wicked people assassinated good people, plundered the properties and violated women. Then a group of good people gathered under the leadership of a man called Sahl bin Salama and opposed the wicked people and with weapons drove them out of Baghdad.²

Baghdad now faced great losses and destruction because of this great sedition. It lost many of its citizens. The armies of al-Mamun marched to surround the palace of al-Amin and defeat his forces. Al-Amin's army was unable to stand against the armies of al-Mamun that had high morale in addition to their weapons and equipment.

The Murder of al-Amin

In the middle of the ordeal al-Amin was busy with amusement and play. Historians said that he was fishing with some of his servants among whom was Kawthar, a favourite of al-Amin. The news of the defeat of his army and the blockade of his palace came to him but he was indifferent. He said: Kawthar has fished three fishes but I have

1. Al-Mas'udi, Muruj al-Dhahab 3:402-403; Tarikh al-Tabari pp. 3-7; Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh 5:143-145.

2. Ittijahat al-Shi'ar al-Arabi p. 73.

fished just two. The vanguard of al-Mamun's army attacked al-Amin and killed him. His head was taken to Tahir bin al-Husayn who set it on a spear and recited the Qur'anic verse "O Allah, master of the kingdom! Thou givest the kingdom to whomsoever Thou pleasest and takest away the kingdom from whomsoever Thou pleasest."¹

﴿اللَّهُمَّ مَلِكُ الْمُلْكِ تُؤْتِي الْمُلْكَ مَنْ تَشَاءُ وَتَنْزِعُ الْمُلْكَ مِمَّنْ تَشَاءُ﴾²

The disagreement between al-Amin and al-Mamun was the most important political event in that era.³

The Caliphate of Ibrahim the Dissolute

Among the political events of that time was the caliphate of Ibrahim al-Khali' (the dissolute) who left no kind of debauchery alone unless he committed it. He was drunk most of the time.⁴ The Abbasids had appointed him as their caliph out of spite and hate towards al-Mamun. Evil people and those preoccupied with leisure and singing had paid homage to him, expecting money from him, but he procrastinated in giving this and when it took too long they surrounded his palace. Then, one of his men came out telling the mob that the caliph had no money. One of the amusing people got up and said: Let our caliph come out to us to sing three songs for the people on this side and three songs for the people on that side, and this will be his gift.⁵

Al-Mamun marched with his armies towards Baghdad to deal with the rebellion of Ibrahim. When Ibrahim heard this, he fled together with all his followers. He remained hidden in Baghdad from fear and fright. When al-Mamun arrested him, he forgave him and set him free because he had no political weight to be feared.

1. 'Uyun al-Tawrikh 3:211; the life of Imam Jawad (as) pp. 193-197.

2. *Surat Al-Imran*, 3:211.

3. Al-Mas'udi, Muruj al-Dhahab 3:424; 'Uyun al-Tawrikh 3:211; al-Mas'udi, Muruj al-Dhahab 3:424.

4. Shaykh al-Saduq, 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida (as) 1:176/hadith 28; al-Aghani, Abu al-Faraja 10:119.

5. Tarikh Baghdad 6:140-141; Ibn 'Asakir, Tarikh Madinat Dimashq, 7:168-170.

The Revolt of Abu al-Saraya

One of the greatest public revolts taking place at the time of Imam Abu Ja'far al-Jawad (as) was the revolt of Abu al-Saraya that defended the fate of all the Muslim people. The revolt involved Imam al-Rida (as) of the progeny of Prophet Muhammad (as) who was the hope of the oppressed and the deprived. The revolt was about to do away with the Abbasid state. Most Muslim countries responded. Through his intelligence and experience, Abu al-Saraya could bring some of Imam Musa al-Kadhim's sons and make them leaders in his army which gained the enthusiastic support of many people, who joined this revolt. However, al-Mamun through his political talents was able to defeat this movement. He brought Imam al-Rida (as) to Khurasan and forced him to accept the position of heir apparent. In doing so, he showed the people that he was Alawi in thought. He was kind to the Alawis and instructed all the bodies of his government to denounce Muawiya and to prefer Imam Ali (as) to all of the Prophet's (sawas) companions. Thus people thought al-Mamun was a Shia. In this cunning way he was able to win, and extinguish the flame of revolt.¹

Imam Jawad (as) spent most of his life in the reign of al-Mamun, which was filled with cunningness. He lived for only a few years after al-Mamun's government. According to some historians, al-Mamun paid special attention towards Imam Jawad (as) and loved him with great sincerity. That is why he married his daughter, Umm al-Fadhl, to the Imam (as). He gave Imam (as) many gifts and kept him safe from any harm. Al-Mamun said that did this purely for the goodwill of Allah. Moreover, he said that he did this to rebuild the relation with the Prophet (sawas) which his father and forefathers had removed.

Obviously the good behaviour of al-Mamun towards Imam Jawad (as) was not because of his sincerity and love for him, but due to

1. Tarikh al-Tabari 7:117-122-139; Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh 5:173-176.

political interests. In fact, there was more behind this charming behaviour of his to the Imam (as) which we will study below.

A small amount of research into Mamun's life, his intellectual and doctrinal inclinations, his good behaviour and his high respect for Imam Jawad (as) will suffice; especially after we have understood the behaviour of al-Mamun to Imam Jawad (as) and the political inclinations behind this behaviour.¹

Abdullah al-Mamun

Abu al-Abbas (al-Mamun) bin Harun bin Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Muhammad bin Ali bin Abdullah was born on Friday night on the fifteenth of the month of Rabi' al-Awwal in 170 A.H. in Yasiria. His mother was a handmaiden called Marajil. The people swore their allegiance to him as the caliph in Marv. Then he moved towards Baghdad. When he entered the city of Baghdad, he was 29 years, 10 months and 10 days old.²

The aspects and tendencies of al-Mamun

The most prominent aspects and tendencies of al-Mamun are as follows:

1. Cunning

Islamic diplomacy in the Abbasid age did not know anyone cleverer than al-Mamun or more aware than him when it came to general political affairs. He was a politician of the first class³. With his intelligence and political talents he was able to overcome many terrible events that afflicted him and were about to terminate his rule and finish him off. He managed to do away with his brother al-Amin who was widely supported by the Abbasid family and the central authorities. He defeated the revolution of Abu al-Saraya that was the greatest military movement against him and which grew until it covered many Islamic districts. The aim of this revolution was to

1. Tarikh al-Khulafa pp. 306-307.

2. Tarikh al-Tabari 7:210-211; Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh 5:227.

3. Samt al-Nujum 3:438.

advocate Imam al-Rida (as) as the real and legal ruler of the Ummah. Imam al-Rida (as), who was chief of the Alawi family, was carried to Khurasan by the order of al-Mamun who forced him to accept the position of heir apparent. He coined money with the name of Imam al-Rida (as). The courtesy that al-Mamun displayed towards Imam al-Rida (as) made the rebels and all the public movements supporting them believe that he (al-Mamun) was serious in his doings until they were certain that there would be no need to revolt and shed blood after Imam al-Rida (as) had become the heir apparent. In this way, he defeated the revolution and did away with its effects.¹

This plan was one of the most ingenious political plans ever conceived in history.

2. Brutality

Brutality was one of the prominent characteristics of al-Mamun. He had no mercy or kindness. He killed his brother al-Amin when his army occupied Baghdad; had he possessed a little mercy he would not have done this.

After he killed Imam al-Rida (as), he treated the Alawis with the utmost brutality, and violence. He instructed his men to torture or kill the Alawis whenever they were discovered.²

3. Treachery

Another characteristic of al-Mamun was treachery. He had appointed Imam al-Rida (as) as his heir apparent and after achieving his political purposes, he poisoned and killed him.

4. His Tendency for Amusement and Leisure

The tendency for leisure and amusement was an element of his life. Here are some examples:

1. Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:259-260.

2. Hayat Imam al-Jawad (as) pp. 221-222.

Playing Chess

Nothing was more beloved to him than playing chess.¹ He was so interested in chess that he had composed some verses of poetry describing it:

A square, red field (made) of skin between two thousand (persons) described by generosity;

They discuss war, so they occupy (places) without striving therein to shed blood;

This attacks this, and that attacks that, and the eye of war does not sleep;

So observe the horses which have surged at battle between two armies without drum nor flag."²

This poetry contains a clear description of chess. It seems that al-Mamun was the first to describe it in detail, and that he learnt this game from his father Harun al-Rashid, who was most skilful at chess. It is worth mentioning that Haroon gave chess pieces to the king of France, and that the pieces can still be seen in French museums.

Love of Music

Al-Mamun was interested in singing and music. He was deeply interested in Abu Ishaq al-Mosuli³ the minstrel who was one of the best and most famous musicians and singers in the Arab world. Al-Mamun said of this artist: "Whenever he sings, the increasing thoughts which come to me from Satan retreat from me."⁴

He passed his nights in singing, dancing and playing the lute whereas Allah did not enter his thoughts during that time.

1. Al-‘Iqd al-Farid 3:254.

2. Al-Mustatraf 2:306.

3. Al-Aghani 5:288-359.

4. The Arabic Civilization by Jack S. Risler p. 108.

5. Claiming Shiasm

Al-Mamun pretended to be a Shia by carrying out some activities that made many researchers think that he was from the Shia. He did the following:

Giving Fadak Back to the Alawis¹

Al-Mamun gave Fadak² back to the Alawis after the previous governments had confiscated it intending to impose economical punishments against the Alawis and keep them in poverty and need with the result that the government would be safe from their resistance. By doing this al-Mamun refuelled the Alawis and saved them from the economical problems that had struck them severely. This became a reason for the people to think that al-Mamun was a Shia believer.

Preferring Imam Ali to Other Companions

Al-Mamun had done a dangerous deed. He had officially announced his preference for Imam Ali (as), the pioneer of social justice in the earth, to all the companions and had also announced the defaming and criticizing of Mu'awiah.³

These two actions were the most important plans that made people think al-Mamun was Shia because all his predecessors used to curse, criticize, and defame Imam Ali (as) and they preferred the companions to him.

Appointing Imam al-Rida as the Heir Apparent

There was another action due to which people thought that al-Mamun was a Shia. It was his appointing Imam al-Rida (as) as his heir apparent and thus he took the caliphate from the Abbasids to the Alawis.

1. Al-Tabari, Dala'il al-Imamah p. 350/hadith 304.

2. Fadak was a vast, fertile village that the Prophet (sawas) had donated to his daughter Fatima (as). It was rich in date palms and other fruit-bearing trees.

3. Tarikh al-Khulafa, p. 308.

These were the most important points that those who thought al-Mamun was a Shia based their information on. However, when we ponder on the matter, we find that al-Mamun was neither a Shia nor was he kind to the Shia. He did those actions just to secure his policies and achieve his purpose. Here are some points that confirm this:

Firstly: Al-Mamun had disagreed with the Abbasid family whose tendencies were towards his brother al-Amin because his mother was Zubayda who was very generous and liberal and from an Abbasid family while the mother of al-Mamun, Marajil, was from the servants of the Abbasid palace; therefore the Abbasids despised him because of his mother. Hence, al-Mamun by pretending to be a Shia, wanted to subjugate his family, the Abbasids, who were the bitterest enemies of Ahlul Bait (as) and of their followers.

Secondly: He wanted to uncover the Shia after they had been unknown to the Abbasid governments. He wanted to know their names, groups and activities. Some official documents issued by him proved this.

Thirdly: He wanted to do away with the revolutionary movement that the Shia had established under the leadership of Abu al-Saraya. Al-Mamun saw that the best way to defeat this movement and halt its activities was through being kind to the Shia.¹

The Inclinations, Positioning and Politics of al-Mamun

Unlike al-Amin who spent all his time in amusements and useless activities, al-Mamun's life, before achieving the post of caliphate, was full of struggles, activities, affectation and piety. Perhaps the reason behind this was that al-Mamun felt that he did not have a mother like al-Amin of long and respected lineage. On the other hand, he did not see a bright and satisfactory future for himself as he knew that he was not liked by most members of the Abbasid family. He was sure that they did not accept him as caliph in their hearts. Therefore, he was compelled to start his activities based on self-confidence. Learning

1. Hayat Imam al-Jawad (as) pp. 221-225.

his weaknesses and the qualities of his brother, he started his preparation and future planning.

To reach his targets, al-Mamun benefited from the weaknesses of his brother and learning from them removed his own weakness. On the other hand, Fadhl, who had been observing al-Amin drowning in pleasures, asked al-Mamun to pretend to be pious and religious. Al-Mamun also accepted his offer. In this way, al-Mamun developed a completely different manner and method of governing and rule as compared with al-Amin. Whenever al-Amin made a mistake, al-Mamun tried to rectify his own mistake.

This was evident when al-Mamun wrote a letter addressed to the people of Bani Abbas in which he mentioned himself as a pious person surrounded by himself and feeling no love and inclination towards the world and its mundane things. He introduced himself as a complete follower of the Islamic rules. Actually, by doing all this he wanted the people to find in him a person different and greater than his brother. He was successful in mastering many sciences of that time and became superior not only to his brother but also to all other Abbasid caliphs before him. There was none among the Abbasids more learned than him."¹

Historians and others researching al-Mamun's life have also borne witness to his superiority and greatness and have named him "the man" of Abbasid caliphs and the "only one" of this family.²

What we shall discuss here is the wisdom, political intelligence and wise schemes of al-Mamun. Despite al-Mamun's superiority over his brother and the good qualities mentioned, al-Harun appointed his son al-Amin as the next caliph saying that Bani Abbas might not accept al-Mamun as their caliph.³

On the other hand, some historians believe that the reason for al-Mamun not being readily accepted by Bani Abbas was that his

1. Hayat al- Hayawan 1:72.

2. Al-Fihrist p. 174.

3. Al-Hayat al-Siyasiah lil Imam al-Rida (as) p. 145. Tarikh al-Khulafa p. 306; Al-Tanbih wa al-Ishraf p. 320.

brother al-Amin was an "Abbasid" in the true sense of the word; because, on one hand, he was the son of al-Harun al-Rashid while on the other hand, his mother was Zubayda who was the granddaughter of al-Mansur. Moreover, al-Amin was brought up in the care of the most influential people of Bani Abbas such as Yahya Barmakid who was the foster brother of al-Harun al-Rashid. Also, Fadhl bin Rabi' who was of Arab descent and whose sincerity regarding Bani Abbas could not be doubted, was his guardian. However, al-Mamun's condition was very different. He was brought up under the care of Ja'far bin Yahya, a person who had less influence in the government than his brother Fadhl. Also, he, who had the responsibility of bringing up and teaching al-Mamun, was not highly accepted by the Abbasids either, because he was accused of harbouring an inclination towards the Alawis. Additionally, al-Mamun's mother, Marajil, was from Khurasan and did not have Arab lineage."¹

The Challenges of al-Mamun

The government of al-Mamun was facing some very serious challenges. On the other hand, the Abbasid's rule was about to finish. Therefore, it was necessary for al-Mamun to show ingenuity to remain in power and save the Abbasid dynasty. The most important challenges which al-Mamun were facing were as follows:

- A.** The Shia revolt against him, which was mainly the revolt of Abu Saraya which spread through all the Islamic region;
- B.** The disagreements of the Abbasids with al-Mamun by taking the side of his brother al-Amin and after him appointing his uncle Ibrahim bin al-Mahdi as caliph;
- C.** Khawarij and movements of other groups;
- D.** The external threats and especially the one from the Byzantines who were considered to be a great enemy of the Islamic government and who were waiting for the right time to remove this government.

To meet these challenges, al-Mamun took the following steps:

1. Al-Hayat al-Siyasiah lil Imam al-Rida (as) pp. 156-157.

- A. Suppression of his brother al-Amin's revolt and other powerful enemies which were taking part in activities against him;
- B. Appointing Imam al-Rida (as) as heir apparent although Imam (as) did not like this. Al-Mamun wanted to make people believe that he, al-Mamun, was also in favour of the divine leadership of the Household (as); and therefore, he gave the government to this holy family. Actually, he merely wanted to silence the Islamic Ummah which was in favour of the Islamic government being handed to the people of the Household (as);
- C. He suppressed the Alawid revolt;
- D. After having suppressed the revolts and movements, he removed Imam al-Rida (as), too, by martyring him;
- E. He went to Baghdad and suppressed the disagreement displayed by the family of Abbas;
- F. To strengthen his own government, he removed the other powers which were present at this time;
- G. He put forward the problem of "creation of the holy Qur'an" to involve the people in it and stop them from thinking about other more important matters;
- H. Removal of rivalry groups such as Khawarijs;
- I. War against Byzantines and removing this threat.

The Relation of Imam al-Rida (as) with al-Mamun

Because of the scientific struggles which the Imams before Imam al-Rida (as) had endured, Imam al-Rida's (as) period is characterised as the most successful from the point of view of Islamic development. This development compelled the Abbasid rulers to do what they did not want. One of the steps taken by them was to hand over the caliphate to the Imam al-Rida (as), announcing him successor to the caliphate after al-Mamun. This was only to show the people that their government was in the favour of returning the post of caliphate to the Household (as). To make the view clearer the following points should be mentioned:

A. The legal leadership from the people's point of view

Apparently, the Islamic Ummah had accepted the leadership of the Imams (as). However, we can mention those under three categories:

1. All the Muslim Ummah had accepted the worthiness of the Household's (as) leadership without having direct connection with them.
2. There were people against the governing system who thought the only way to get back the post of caliphate and hand it over to those deserving it [the Imams (as)] was by revolution and war against the government like Abu Saraya;
3. The third group of people comprised of those faithful people amongst the Imam's (as) companions who were completely aware of his legal leadership.

B. Al-Mamun's Struggles

To overcome the above-mentioned problems, al-Mamun planned some wise political steps which were as follows:

1. Facing the revolutionaries and the friends of the Household (as) and removing their threat. One of the greatest public revolts that had taken place at the time of Mamun was the revolt of Abu al-Saraya who invited the people to someone from the progeny of Prophet Muhammad (sawas). Finally there was a battle between his army and al-Mamun's army commanded by Hassan bin Sahl. Al-Mamun's army became victorious and he was killed.
2. Bringing the inclinations of the people under control.

For this purpose, al-Mamun used a wonderful political trick. By asking the people to swear their allegiance to Imam al-Rida (as) as crown prince and by pretending to have inclination towards the Household (as) he just wanted to overcome the people's inclinations and bring them under his own control. For this purpose it was necessary for him to bring Imam al-Rida (as) from Madinah to Khurasan. Therefore he asked a person named "Jaludi" to bring some of the Alawis from Madinah. This person went and brought the persons according to al-Mamun's orders. Imam al-Rida (as) was also among the people whom he brought to Khurasan. They were brought

to al-Mamun from the rout of Basra. The Alawis were kept at one place while Imam (as) was asked to live somewhere else. The Abbasid caliph showed him hospitality and great respect, and then he sent someone to Imam al-Rida (as) and said to him: "I want to rid myself of the caliphate and vest the office in you."

However Imam al-Rida (as) refused his offer saying: "I seek Allah's shelter for you against your words and against them to be heard by anyone else."

Then al-Mamun repeated his offer in a letter saying: "If you refuse what I have offered you, then you must accept being the heir after me."

Once again Imam al-Rida (as) refused his offer vigorously.

Al-Mamun summoned him. He was alone with al-Fadhl bin Sahl, the noble in charge of two offices. There was no one else in their presence. Al-Mamun said to Imam al-Rida (as), "I thought it appropriate to invest authority over the Muslims in you and to relieve myself of the responsibility by giving it to you." Again Imam al-Rida (as) refused to accept his offer saying: "For God's sake, O commander of the faithful! I cannot afford it."

Al-Mamun said: "Then I want you to become my heir for the post of caliphate."

Imam al-Rida (as) answered: "Forgive me for this, O commander of the faithful!"

Al-Mamun spoke to him as if threatening him for his refusal. In his speech he said, "Umar ibn al-Kahttab made a committee of consultation (*shura*) to appoint a successor. Among them was your forefather, the commander of the faithful: "Ali ibn Abi Talib. (Umar) stipulated that anyone who opposed the decision should be executed. So there is no escape for you from accepting what I want from you. I will ignore your rejection of it."

In reply, Imam al-Rida (as) said: "I will agree to what you want of me as far as succession is concerned on condition that I do not command, nor order, nor give legal decisions, nor judge, nor appoint, nor dismiss, nor change anything from how it is at present."

Al-Mamun accepted all that.¹

We can see that Imam al-Rida (as) had no other option but to accept al-Mamun's offer; otherwise, al-Mamun would kill him.

Al-Raian Bin al-Salt visited Imam al-Rida, (as), and said to him: O son of Allah's apostle, surely the people say: "Verily, you have accepted regency though you show asceticism in the world."

So the Imam answered him: "Allah was already aware that I hated this. So when I had to choose between that and murder, I preferred acceptance rather than murder. Woe upon them! Surely Yusuf was a prophet and messenger, but when necessity forced him to undertake the treasures of al-Aziz (the Chief of Egypt), he said to him: Place me (in authority) over the treasures of the land; surely I am a good keeper, knowing well. Similarly, necessity forced me to accept that (i.e. regency), as I was forced to and was about to be destroyed. I have accepted this matter and will leave it. So I complain to Allah, and it is He whom we ask for help."²

Abu Salt Harawi has narrated: "Al-Mamun said to Ali bin Musa al-Rida (as): "O son of the prophet of Allah (sawas), I am aware of your grace, wisdom, piety, self-control and worship; and I think you are more deserving for the post of caliphate than I."

Imam (as) replied: "I thank Allah for being His servant. By remaining pious in this world, I hope to free myself from the curses of the world. By self-control regarding Maharim [those women with whom marrying or having a sexual connection is impermissible in Islam] I am hoping for rewards in the world hereafter and by humility in this world I hope to have a high position before Him."

Al-Mamun said: "I want to draw back from the post of caliphate and give its responsibility to you, swearing the oath of my allegiance to you, too."

1. Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:259-326; al-Fattal al-Nayshaburi, Rawdat al-Wa'izin pp. 224-225.

2. Al-Nayshaburi, Rawdat al-Wa'izin p.224; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 49:130/hadith 4; Amali al-Saduq pp. 130-131/hadith 4.

Imam (as) replied: "If the clothing of caliphate has been made for your body, you cannot take it off and have another wear it; and if the caliphate is not your authority, even so you do not have the right to give anything to anyone which does not belong to you."

Al-Mamun said: "O the son of the Prophet (sawas), you must accept my offer."

Imam (as) replied: "I will never accept it willingly."

Al-Mamun kept insisting on his offer for some days. At last he gave up hope and understood that Imam (as) was not going to accept his offer. Therefore, he said to him: "Now that you have rejected being caliph, at least accept being be my heir and successor for the post of the caliphate."

Imam said: "By God! My father has narrated from his forefathers and they have narrated it from the commander of the faithful (as) who has narrated it from the Prophet (sawas) that I will be poisoned and die before you die. The angels from heaven will cry and weep for me and I will be buried next to Harun al-Rashid."

Al-Mamun cried and said: "Who will dare to kill you, as long as I live?" The Imam said: "If it were not unwise I would even tell you the name of my killer."

When al-Mamun realized that he was not relenting he was infuriated and he said: "By this refusal you aim to become famous for your piety and abstemiousness and thus my helpless and weakness will become obvious." Imam said, "I have never lied in my life. It does not befit me to pretend austerity for the sake of material gain. But I know what you want."

Al-Mamun asked: "What do I want?"

Imam (as) said: "Guarantee my life and then I will tell you."

Al-Mamun said: "Your life is guaranteed."

Imam (as) said: "Your insistence in this matter shows that you want to prove to the world that Ali bin Musa (as) was not abstemious in the real sense. Material wealth had itself deserted him for some time. And when it came back to him he became involved in it with all desire and fondness."

Hearing this reply al-Mamun became angry and making a show of his apparent strength and power said: "You always behave in an unpleasant manner and make me angry as if you consider yourself free from my anger and harm. If you do not accept my heir-apparency and continue to refuse it, I will have you killed."

Imam (as) said: "If the matter has reached this point, I will accept it with the conditions that I will not be involved in administration, I will not refrain from enjoining good and forbidding evil and I will never support you in an unlawful matter."

Al-Mamun accepted his conditions and chose him as his heir, although he did not like doing so.¹

C. With Aware Believers

Al-Mamun always feared Imam al-Rida (as) because he considered Imam (as) a great danger to himself. Therefore he kept looking for an appropriate moment to kill Imam (as). Two years [and some months] after swearing the oath of his allegiance for Imam al-Rida (as) as the heir-apparent, which took place on the first of the holy month of Ramadan in 201 A.H.,² al-Mamun got a chance to act upon his ominous plan and compelled his men to poison Imam (as) to death. Finally, Imam al-Rida (as) was poisoned in the month of Safar in 203 A.H. in Khurasan at the age of 55 and left this world.³

We shall now study some traditions narrated by Imam al-Rida's (as) companions who will help us understand al-Mamun's motive behind making Imam al-Rida (as) his heir and successor:

Ahmad bin Ali Ansari narrates: I asked Abu Salt Harawi: "How could al-Mamun kill Al-Rida (as) in spite of his honouring and loving him and his having made him his heir apparent?"

1. Shaykh al-Saduq, 'Ilal al-Shara'i' 1:237-238; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar:128-129.

2. Tarikh al-Tabari 7:150; Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh 5:193; Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:247.

3. Shaykh al-Saduq, 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida (as) 1:265; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 49:290/hadith 2.

Abu Salt replied: "Al-Mamun honoured and loved Imam al-Rida (as) because he was aware of his virtues which were also known to the people, and he appointed him as his heir apparent to make people think that Imam al-Rida (as) wished for this worldly life and its pleasures and would consequently be disrespected by the people, but when his virtue and respect among people grew even more, he (al-Mamun) sent for theologians from different countries hoping that one of them might defeat Imam al-Rida (as) and then he would be disrespected by the scholars and that would spread among the public and they would then turn their backs on him. But every opponent from the Jews, the Christians, the magi, the apostates, the Brahman, the atheists, the Dahriah, and every opponent from the dissenting Muslim sects was defeated by Imam al-Rida (as) due to clear evidence. People began saying: By Allah, he is even worthier of the caliphate than al-Mamun: and the newsmen reported that to him (al-Mamun) and he became very angry and envious.

Spies and informers kept informing al-Mamun about what the people were saying and thinking about Imam al-Rida (as), hearing which al-Mamun became more and more angry and jealous of the Imam (as). On the other hand, Imam (as) never compromised with al-Mamun on matters of truth and justice and answered him in such a manner which apparently made him angry; and his revengefulness towards Imam (as) increased. However, he never let his revengefulness and enmity with Imam (as) be seen on his face. Finally he failed to keep it hidden any more because Imam (as) had become intolerable to him. Therefore he martyred him by poisoning him."

Ali ibn Ibrahim quoted on the authority of Yasir, the servant: "When there were seven way-stations between us and Tus, Abu al-Hasan al-Rida (as) fell ill. We reached Tus and by then his illness had become worse. We stayed in Tus for several days. Al-Mamun went to visit him twice daily. On the last day - the day on which he died - al-Rida (as) had become much weaker. After saying his noon prayer, al-Rida (as) asked: "O Yasir! Do these people not eat anything?" I asked: "O my master! How can they eat anything seeing the way you are?" Then al-Rida (as) sat up and said: "Spread out the tablecloth." Al-Rida (as) called in all his workers and had them all sit at the table cloth. Al-Rida asked each one of them about his health. Then after they had all eaten, al-Rida (as) ordered that they take food for the women, too,

and feed all of them. When this was done he became very weak and fell unconscious. Everyone present started to weep. All of Al-Mamun's maids and wives rushed in without wearing their veils. Weeping and mourning filled Tus. Al-Mamun himself was barefoot and his head was uncovered, and he was hitting himself on the head and trying to cover his wives' hair with his long beard. He was expressing his sorrow by weeping, and tears were streaming down his face. He went over to al-Rida's (as) side. Then al-Rida (as) regained consciousness. Al-Mamun said: "O my Master! By God! I do not know which calamity is worse for me: losing you and being away from you or the people's accusing me of poisoning and killing you. "

Yasir added: Then the Imam (as) opened his eyes a little, looked at al-Mamun and said, "O commander of the faithful! Treat Abi Ja'far (Imam al-Rida's son) (as) with kindness since your life and his life are like this." As he said that he (as) brought his forefingers together.

Yasir added: "When night came and some time had passed, al-Rida (as) passed away. Then when the morning came the people gathered there and said: 'This man (referring to al-Mamun) killed him. This man martyred him.' They meant al-Mamun. They kept on saying: 'The son of God's Prophet (sawas) has been killed.' There was much turmoil. Muhammad ibn Ja'far ibn Muhammad (Imam al-Rida's uncle) who had sought refuge from al-Mamun and had come from Madinah to Khurasan was there. He was Abu al-Hasan al-Rida's uncle. Then al-Mamun told him: 'O Aba Ja'far (Muhammad ibn Ja'far ibn Muhammad)! Go out to the people and tell them that they will not bring out Aba al-Hasan al-Rida's (as) corpse today. Tell them to go about their own business.' Al-Mamun did not wish the body to be taken out, fearing that it might result in sedition. Then Muhammad ibn Ja'far went out and told the people: "O people! Disperse! Indeed today Aba al-Hasan al-Rida (as) will not be brought out.' Then the people dispersed. Then they performed the ritual ablution for death on Aba al-Hasan al-Rida (as) at night and buried him."¹

1. Shaykh al-Saduq, 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida (as) 1:269-270; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 49:229/hadith 9.

The Quality of al-Mamun's Rule

Al-Mamun showed feelings of great anxiety on the death of Imam Al-Rida (as) which deceived many simple and common people; however, the special people understood what was really happening. They understood that al-Mamun was trying to deceive them. We have already seen from Aba Salt's letter that they were completely aware of al-Mamun's cunning.

The letter written by "Abdullah bin Musa," which we will mention in the following lines, will help us to understand clearly what we have just stated above about al-Mamun's cunning.

The great Sayid Abdullah bin Musa bin Abdullah bin al-Hasan "al-musanna" bin al-Hassan bin Ali bin Abi Talib (as) completely unveiled the qualities of al-Mamun's rule. He also mentioned the quality of the relation between al-Mamun and Imam al-Jawad (as) which shows his sharp understanding regarding al-Mamun's government.

Abdullah bin Musa chose to live a quiet and hidden life without playing any role in politics and the Abbasids' government. Al-Mamun wrote a letter to him in which he guaranteed his life and said that 'after seeing my behaviour with Imam Al-Rida (as), I don't think that Alawis will fear me any longer.'

Abdullah replied: "I received your letter and understood what you wrote in it. You are deceiving me like a hunter and want to shed my blood. I am surprised to learn about your offer regarding becoming your heir. You think I do not know what you did with Imam al-Rida (as)? What made you believe that I would accept your offer? Is it the sweetness of your rule which has deceived you? Or do you think that I am interested in the poisonous grapes with which you killed Imam al-Rida (as) and do you consider that being hidden has made me hope for power and government?"

By God, it is better for me to go to hell than to come into power among the Muslims; or in great thirst, I should drink a *haram* drop of water. If my religion would allow me to come to your side, I would do so; but Allah has prohibited me from endangering my life. I wish you would kill me and shed my blood before I accept your offer and meet my God as a martyr.

O al-Mamun! You must know that I have always sought deliverance and I have always tried for God's willingness. I always have tried to do that which takes me near to Allah; but I did not find anyone who could take me to what I want. Therefore, I took help from the holy Qur'an. I went through each verse and chapter and found what I was looking for. I went through the Book for the second time to find which *jihad* is greater than other *jihads*. Suddenly I reached the verse of the holy Book which says:

﴿قَاتِلُوا الَّذِينَ يَلُونَكُمْ مِنَ الْكُفَّارِ وَلْيَجِدُوا فِيكُمْ غِلْظَةً﴾

*"O you who have faith! Fight the faithless who are in your vicinity, and let them find severity in you, and know that Allah is with those wary of God."*¹

Then I started researching about the pagans and infidels who can harm Islam the most and I found no one more dangerous than you; because the infidels clearly mention their perspective and the people know about them and are ready for their harm; but you have pretended to be a Muslim! You kill anyone when you become angry with him, and punish him when you accuse him of something; you take property illegally and invest it in the wrong manner. You drink wine which has been made *haram* by Allah. You give the property of Allah to singers and dancers and deprive Muslims of it. You deceive the people. You have taken charge of Islamic society as if it has been ruled by Muslims. Your judgments are in favour of the dualists and you show your revengefulness and enmity against Allah and His Prophet (sawas).

Now if Allah helps me and gives me superiority over you, I will fight you. And if He takes my soul before declaring *jihad* against you and if He wants you to be punished in the other world, still He knows my intentions which is enough for me. Farewell."²

1. *Surat al-Tawbah*, 9:123.

2. Abu al-Faraj, *Maqatil al-Talibin* p.416-417.

The Martyrdom of Imam al-Rida (as) and Imamah of Imam Jawad (as)

As every Imam (as) names the Imam to follow him, Imam al-Rida (as) also named his successor; this was Imam Jawad (as), the Imam to follow him. Here we shall give some examples in which Imam al-Rida (as) mentioned Imam Jawad (as) as the next Imam and called the Shi'ah to turn to him as Imam (as).

1. It is said: A man who was present in a meeting (of people) with Abu al-Hasan al-Rida (as) spoke to me of the information herein. When people prepared to leave the meeting the Imam (as) said to them, "Meet Abu Ja'far (as), (before you leave), offer him greeting and renew your covenant with him." When left alone, he (the Imam) said to me, "May Allah grant well-being to al-Mufaddal, he would have believed (in the succeeding Imam) without it (the command to renew their covenant)."¹

It is said: "I heard (Abu al-Hasan) al-Rida who said something (leadership with Divine Authority) and then said, "I do not think you need what I just said. This is abu Ja'far (as). I have placed him in my own place to assume my position. We are of the family of Ahl al-Bait whose younger ones inherit from their elders everything exactly in proportion."²

It is said: I heard Ali bin Ja'far speaking to Hasan bin al-Husayn bin Ali bin al-Husayn saying: "Certainly Allah the Exalted helps Abu al-Hasan al-Rida (as) when his cousins and brothers betray him."

Then after talking for a long time he said: I stood and took the hand of Abu Ja'far (Jawad) Muhammad bin Ali al-Rida (as) and said to him: "I bear witness that you are my Imam (as)."

Imam Al-Rida (as) wept and said: O uncle, my father has narrated from the Messenger of Allah (sawas) that he said: "May my father be

1. Al-Kulayni, Al-Kafi 1:320; Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 24/hadith 16; Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:276.

2. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:320/hadith 2; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50/hadith 9; Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:247.

ransom for the purified handmaiden of 'Nawba' whose son has been banished and who has not yet asked for vengeance for the bloodshed of his father. He is the boy who is the master of a long occultation. It will be said about him: no matter where he has gone, but certainly he has been killed. Have you heard this from my father? He said: May I be ransom for you, you have told the truth."¹

A narrator said: Once, I said to Imam al-Rida (as): we often asked you, before Allah granted Abu Ja'far to you, about the imam after you and you would say 'Allah will give me a boy.' Now, Allah has given you a boy and has delighted our eyes. If something happens (to you), to whom shall we refer? He pointed to Abu Ja'far (al-Jawad) who was before him and who was at that time three years old. I said, 'He is a three-year-old child!' He said, 'It does not matter. Jesus Christ (a.s) was entrusted with prophethood when he was less than three years old.'²

A narrator said: "I was with Abu al-Hasan al-Rida (as) when Imam Jawad (as) was brought to him. Imam al-Rida (as) said: "This is a baby so blessed and lucky that no other one has ever been before in our Shia."³

Also it is narrated: When Abu Ja'far (as) was born, I went to visit Imam al-Rida (as). He said: "Allah has granted me someone who will succeed me and inherit the children of Dawud."⁴

It is narrated: Once I was in the presence of Imam al-Rida (as). He called his son who was a small (boy). The Imam (as) placed him on my lap and said to me. "Move his shirt aside." When I did so, the Imam (as) said, "Look between his shoulders." I looked and I found

1. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:323/hadith 14; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:21/hadith 7; Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:276.

2. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:321/hadith 10; Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:276; I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda 2:93.

3. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:321/hadith 10; Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:279; Ithbat al-Wasiah pp. 184-185.

4. al-Saffar, Basa'ir al-Darajat p. 185/chapter 10/hadith 14; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:18/hadith 3.

in the skin of one shoulder something like an imprint of a seal." The Imam (as) then asked, "Do you see this? There was one similar on my father's shoulder."¹

It is narrated: "Imam al-Rida (as) would glorify his son Muhammad al-Jawad. He did not mention (his son) Muhammad except by his surname. He often says: Abu Ja'far (Muhammad al-Jawad) wrote to me, or I wrote to Abu Ja'far...and even though he is still a child in Madinah, the letters that come to his father are so eloquent and fluent."

The narrator said that he heard Imam al-Rida (as) say: Abu Ja'far is my administrator and successor after me among my family.²

The narrator said: I heard De'abel Khuza'iy saying: I recited my eulogy for my master Ali bin Musa al-Rida (as)... Imam said: "O De'abel! After me my son Muhammad (Jawad) is the Imam and after Muhammad his son Ali and after Ali his son Hasan (Askari) and after Hasan his son the awaited divine proof will be the Imams."³

Imam Jawad (as) at the Time of his Father's Death

Abu Salt al-Harawi tells us that he said, "I was standing before Abu al-Hasan Ali ibn Musa al-Rida (as) when he told me: 'O Aba Salt! Go into the mausoleum where Harun's grave is located. Collect a handful of dirt from each corner and bring them to me.' I went and did what al-Rida (as) had asked me to do. Then when I stood before al-Rida (as) once more, he (as) was standing near the door. I handed him the dirt one handful at a time. He smelled each one and threw it away. Then he said: 'Here they will dig a grave for me. A rock will appear which they cannot remove, even if they bring all the mattocks in Khurasan.' Then al-Rida (as) said the same thing about the dirt at the head and feet of Harun. Then al-Rida (as) said: 'Give me that other

1. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:321/hadith 8; Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:278, Madinah Al- Ma'ajiz 7:294/hadith 2333; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:23/hadith 13.

2. Shaykh al-Saduq, 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida (as) 1:266/chapter 60/hadith 1; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:18/hadith 2.

3. 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida (as) 1:296-297/chapter 66/hadith 35.

handful of dirt.' I handed him the dirt from the front of Harun's grave. al-Rida (as) took it and said: "This is the dirt that will be the soil of my grave.' Then Al-Rida (as) said: They will dig a grave for me in this place. You must order them to dig it seven steps deep. Then you must ask them to extend the grave in one direction and construct a grave. If they refuse to do so and insist that it must be the usual type of grave, you will tell them that the grave must be as wide as two arm lengths plus the span of one wide open hand. Indeed God will extend it as much as He wills. Once they do so, you will notice water there. Recite what I teach you and then the grave will be filled with water. You will see many small fish in it. Then you must feed them with pieces of the bread which I shall give you now. Once they eat it all, a large fish will appear and eat up all the small fish until they all disappear. Then the large fish will disappear too. Then you must put your hand in the water and recite what I shall teach you now. Then the water will drain away and nothing will be left. Do not do this except in the presence of al-Mamun.' Then al-Rida (as) added: "O Aba Salt! Tomorrow I shall go to see this adulterer (referring to Al-Mamun)! If I leave there with a bare head, talk to me and I will respond. However, if when I return my head is covered, then do not talk to me."

Aba Salt continued, "When the morning came, al-Rida (as) put on his clothes and sat down, waiting in his prayer niche. Al-Mamun's servant entered after a while and said: "The commander of the faithful (al-Mamun) has summoned you.' Then al-Rida (as) put on his shoes and cloak. He stood up and left. I followed al-Rida (as) to al-Mamun. There was a dish of grapes in front of al-Mamun and several dishes of fruit, too. There was a bunch of partially eaten grapes in his hand. There were still some grapes left on it. Once al-Mamun saw al-Rida (as), he leaped towards him and hugged him. He kissed his forehead and had him sit down next to him. Then he offered al-Rida (as) the bunch of grapes that he was holding in his hands and said: O son of God's prophet! Have you ever seen any better grapes? Then al-Rida (as) told him: It often happens that they are good grapes as if they are from Heaven. Then al-Mamun said: Have some. Then al-Rida (as) told him: Excuse me from eating them. Then he said: You must eat. Why don't you eat? Perhaps you are suspicious of me. Then al-Mamun picked up the bunch of grapes, had a few grapes and then

offered the bunch to al-Rida (as). Al-Rida (as) ate three grapes, put down the bunch and stood up. Al-Mamun asked him: Where are you going? He (as) said: I am going to where you sent me. Al-Rida (as) pulled his cloak over his head and left."

Aba Salt added, "I did not talk to Al-Rida (as) until he entered the house and said: Shut the doors. They shut the doors. Then al-Rida (as) lay in bed. I stayed in the yard for a while in a sad and depressed state. Then I saw a handsome young man, who was the closest-looking person to al-Rida (as) I have ever seen, enter the house. I rushed ahead and asked him: Sir! The doors are closed. How did you get in? He (as) answered: He (God) who passed me through closed doors brought me here from Madinah. I asked: Who are you?' He (as) replied: I am the proof of God for you. O Aba Salt! I am Muhammad ibn Ali (Imam al-Rida's son). Then he (as) went to his father (as). He (as) entered the room and asked me to go in with him. When al-Rida (as) saw him, he leaped towards him. Al-Rida (as) hugged him and put his hands on his shoulders. Then al-Rida (as) kissed him on the forehead and went back to his couch with him. Muhammad ibn Ali (as) went over to him, kissed him and quietly told him things which I could not hear. Al-Rida (as) passed away. Then Abu Ja'far said: O Aba Salt! Stand up. Go and bring me water and the wash basin from the cabinet. I answered: There is no wash basin in the cabinet and there is no water there either. However, Abu Ja'far (as) said: Go and do what I ordered you to do. I went to the cabinet, and saw that both water and the wash basin were indeed there. I fetched them. Then I hitched my robe up to my waist and took off my footwear to prepare to wash Imam al-Rida (as). But Abu Ja'far (as) told me, "O Aba Salt! Move aside. There is someone else here who will assist me." Then Abu Ja'far (as) performed the ceremonial burial ablutions on al-Rida (as) and told me, 'Go to the cabinet and bring me the basket in which there is a shroud and embalmment.' I went to the cabinet. There I saw a basket which I had never seen before. I picked it up and brought it to him. Abu Ja'far (as) shrouded the Imam (as) and prayed for him. Then he (as) told me: Bring me that coffin. Then I asked: Should I go to a carpenter and have him make a coffin? Abu Ja'far (as) said: No. Go to the cabinet. There is a coffin there. I went to the cabinet and found that there was a coffin there which I had never seen before. I picked it up and brought it to him.

Abu Ja'far (as) lifted Imam al-Rida (as) after praying for him and placed him in the coffin. He put Al-Rida's (as) feet side by side and said two units of prayers. Then before finishing his prayers the ceiling of the room was rent asunder and the coffin flew from the room through the ceiling. Then I said: O son of the Prophet of God (Abu Ja'far)! Now al-Mamun will come here and demand al-Rida (as) from us. What should we do? Abu Ja'far (as) said: O Aba Salt! Be quiet! The body will return. God will unite the body and the spirit together of any prophet who dies in the east and any of his trustees who die in the west. Abu Ja'far (as) had not finished talking when the ceiling was again rent asunder, and the coffin and the body descended. Then Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Ali (as) stood up, brought the corpse out of the coffin and placed it in bed as if it had neither been washed nor shrouded.

Then Abu Ja'far (as) said to me: O Aba Salt! Stand up and open the door for Al-Mamun. Then I opened the door. Al-Mamun and his servants were standing at the door. He entered while he was in a sad state and weeping. He tore his shirt and hit himself on the head. He said: O descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (as)! O my Master! Your death is a great calamity for me. Then Al-Mamun entered and sat next to Al-Rida's (as) head and said: Start to prepare him. Then al-Mamun ordered that a grave be dug. I (i.e. Aba Salt) dug at the location that Imam al-Rida (as) had previously ordered me to select. Everything happened just as al-Rida (as) had said it would. One of al-Mamun's people asked him: Do you not say and do you not believe that he was a divine leader? Al-Mamun replied: 'Yes. He would not be a divine leader unless he were superior to all the people.' Then al-Mamun ordered that a grave be dug for al-Rida (as) facing the direction of the *Qibla*. Aba Salt added, "Then I said: Al-Rida (as) has ordered me to dig down about seven steps. Then I must extend the grave for his tomb in one direction.' Al-Mamun ordered the workers: "Do as Aba Salt says except for the tomb. Dig a usual type of grave.' However, once Al-Mamun saw that the water appeared, the fish appeared, and the other things happened, Al-Mamun said: "Al-Rida (as) continuously showed us miracles during his lifetime. We even see miracles after his death.' One of the ministers who were there asked: "Do you know what al-Rida (as) is informing you about?' Al-Mamun replied: "No.' The minister said: "Al-Rida (as) is trying to make you understand that your rule - the *Abbasids* - and your

population and the extent of your rule is like these fish, until your time is over and your death arrives. Then you will lose your reign. Then God the Highest will designate a man from the members of the Holy Household of the Prophet (sawas) as the ruler over you who will destroy all of you - from the first to the last one of you.' Al-Mamun replied: "You are right.' Then Al-Mamun turned towards Aba Salt and said: "O Aba Salt! Tell me the words you recited which caused the big fish to swallow the little fish. Teach them to me.' I replied: "By God, I have forgotten them now.' I had said the truth but he ordered that I be thrown into jail. They buried al-Rida (as) and I stayed in jail for one year. I had a very hard time there. One night I could not sleep. I stayed up and prayed to God the Blessed the Highest. I kept mentioning Muhammad (sawas) and his Household (as). I kept asking God for a happy ending. Before I had finished my prayers Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn Ali (as) entered and said: "O Aba Salt! Is your breast straightened?' Then I said: "By God! Yes.' Then Aba Ja'far (as) said: "Stand up and leave here with me.'

Then Aba Ja'far (as) placed his hands on my chains and they all opened up. He (as) took my hands and brought me out of jail, while the prison guards were watching us but did not have the power to utter a single word. Then Aba Ja'far (as) told me: "Go. I entrust you to God! Know that you will never again encounter al-Mamun. Neither will al-Mamun ever find you." Aba Salt added, "al-Mamun has not found me to this day."¹

1. Amali al-Saduq pp. 759-762/hadith 1026; 'Uyun Akhbar al-Rida (as) 1:271-274/chapter 63/hadith 1; al-Nayshaburi, Rawdat al-Wa'izin pp. 229-233; al-Rawandi, al-Khara'ij wa'l-Jara'ih 1:352-356/hadith 8; al-Tabarsi, I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda 2:81-85; Ibn Shahr'ashub, al-Manaqib 4:374-376; Madinah Al- Ma'ajiz 7:158-164/hadith 2248; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 49:300-303/hadith 10.

SECTION THREE

It Consists Of Three Chapters:

Chapter One

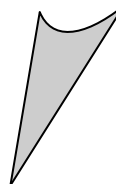
The Age of Imam Jawad (as)

Chapter Two

Imam Jawad (as) and His Contemporary Rulers

Chapter Three

The Necessities of Imam Jawad's (as) Era



CHAPTER ONE

THE AGE OF IMAM AL-JAWAD (AS)

The age of Imam Abu Ja'far al-Jawad (as) was one of the brightest and most wonderful Islamic eras. It was distinguished by its scientific and intellectual development. Muslims and non-Muslims thrived for generations and centuries upon the intellectual and scientific treasures established during that time.

We must briefly discuss the aspects of life in the age of Imam al-Jawad (as). The study of that time is essential for researchers because it uncovers the dimensions of personality and provides insight into intellectual and other facets.

1. Cultural Life

Cultural life in that era was considered one of the most significant of all the Islamic ages. Cultural movements flourished, science became widespread, institutes were established, public libraries opened everywhere and people developed a quest for knowledge.

Nicholson says: The vast area of the Abbasid State, its abundant wealth and the prosperity of trade had a great influence on the cultural renaissance that the East had never witnessed before, until it seemed that all people from the caliph to the meanest person in society had suddenly become students seeking knowledge or at least assistants to literature. During the reign of the Abbasid State, people travelled through three continents looking for sources of knowledge to come back to their countries like bees carrying honey to the eager students. Then they classified, by virtue of their great efforts, this information in books which were like the encyclopaedias of today and which were excellent for conveying these modern sciences to the people in a way never before experienced.¹

1. Dr. Hassan Ibrahim Hassan, *Tarikh al-Islam (History of Islam)* 2:32.

We will here briefly mention the real and basic characteristics of the scientific age of Imam Jawad (as).

Cultural Centres

The cultural centres at the time of Imam al-Jawad (as) were:

1. Madinah

Madinah was one of the most important scientific centres of that age. The school of the Household (as) had been established there and included the best jurists and narrators who made every effort to record the traditions of the infallible imams of the Household (as) for these traditions were the spirit and essence of Islam. In Madinah, the school of Successors had also been established. It was a jurisprudential school that took jurisprudence from the traditions narrated by the Prophet's companions or from opinion and analogy.

2. Kufa

Kufa came after Madinah in its importance. The great mosque in Kufa was one of the most important Islamic institutes and schools. Many seminars were held in this mosque. The general focus of study was on the Islamic sciences such as jurisprudence, *tafsir* (interpretation of the Qur'an), *hadith* and other branches.

Kufa had adopted the Alawite doctrine and its school was interested in the knowledge of the Household (as). Al-Hasan bin Ali al-Washsha' said: I have seen in this mosque (the mosque of Kufa) nine hundred sheiks each saying: Ja'far bin Muhammad (al-Sadiq) has told me so-and-so.¹

"Aal Hayan Taghlabi, Aal Ayn, Banu Atiyah and Banu Darraj were among the most important knowledgeable and knowledge-loving families who gained their knowledge in the scientific meetings of this mosque."²

It was not only jurisprudence that was taught in the school of Kufa; grammar was also studied and taught. In Kufa, a school of

1. Rijal al-Najashi p. 40.

2. Dr. Hassan Ibrahim Hassan, Tarikh al-Islam 2:338.

grammarians had been established. One of the famous scholars of this school was al-Kisayi, whom al-Rashid (the Abbasid caliph) had entrusted to teach his two sons al-Amin and al-Mamun.¹ It is worth mentioning that grammar had been established by Imam Ali (as). It was he who had classified the bases and rules of Arabic grammar.

3. Basra

Basra was a very important centre of grammar. The first to establish the school of Basra was Abul Aswad al-Du'ali, the disciple of Imam Ali (as).² This school competed with the school of Kufa. The grammarians of Basra were called (people of logic) to distinguish them from the grammarians of Kufa. One of the most prominent scholars of this school of grammar was Sibawayh the Persian who had written a book called "the book of Sibawayh" that is the most mature book in Arabic.

De Beaur says: If we look at the book of Sibawayh, we find it a mature work and a great one. Later scholars have said it must be the fruit of cooperative efforts of scientists like the Canon of Avicenna.³

As Basra was a field for grammar it was a school of *tafsir*, one of whose prominent ulama was Abu Amr bin al-Ala'. It was also a school of prosody whose bases had been established by al-Khalil bin Ahmad the author of "al-Ayn" which was the first dictionary in the Arabic language.

4. Baghdad

Baghdad had flourished with many scientific and cultural movements. Institutes and schools had spread everywhere and knowledge had become available to all. Baghdad had not specialized in a specific branch of knowledge like the other Islamic centres, but it had a range of sciences and arts. Baghdad was the greatest scientific centre in that age. Students from all over of the world came to it seeking knowledge. (Augustan Le Bon) says, 'Scientists, artists and men of

1. Al-Mas'udi, Muruj al-Dhahab 3:362.

2. Al-Aghani 12:346-348.

3. Tarikh al-Falsafa fi al-Islam p. 39.

literature from all nations and countries; Greeks, Persians, Copts and others came to Baghdad and made it the centre of culture in the world.' Abul Faraj al-Isfahani said that al-Mamun was often alone with philosophers. He liked their company and felt pleased with their discussions though he knew that people of knowledge were the choice of Allah from among His creatures and the elite of His people.¹

Until now we have mentioned some of the scientific centres of that time. Here we will mention the common sciences of that era:

Sciences of the Qur'an

From among the sciences of the Qur'an, there are:

1. Recitation

This branch of knowledge studies the recitation of the Qur'an. It has been found in seven ways and each way is ascribed to a reciter. Among the famous reciters in the Abbasid age were Yahya bin al-Harith al-Thimari (d.154 AH), Hamza bin Habib al-Zaiat (d.156 AH), Abu Abd al-Rahman al-Muqri (d. 213 AH) and Khalaf bin Hisham al-Bazzaz (d. 229 AH).²

2. Tafsir (The Exegesis of the Holy Qur'an)

This is the interpretation of the Holy Qur'an and the understanding of its meaning. The commentators of the Holy Qur'an had two ways in which to interpret.

The first is the interpretation via the transmitted sayings of the Prophet (sawas) and the infallible imams. This is the way followed by most of the Shia commentators like in Tafsir al-Qummi, Tafsir al-Askari and Tafsir al-Burhan. Their evidence on that is that the infallible imams were singled out with the knowledge of the Qur'an as it was in its reality and fact.

Imam Abu Ja'far al-Baqir (as) says, 'No one can claim that he has (the knowledge of) all the Qur'an, its esoteric and apparent knowledge

1. Hadharat al-Arab p.218.

2. Al-Ma'arif p. 230-231, Ibn al- Nadim, al-Fihrist p. 42-45.

except the guardians.¹ There is much evidence to indicate that we must refer to the infallible imams when interpreting the Qur'an.

Shaykh al-Tusi says: 'Interpreting the Qur'an is not possible except by relying on the true traditions of the Prophet (sawas) and the infallible *imams* whose sayings are evidence like the Prophet's.'²

The second is the interpretation due to the opinion that one should rely on the reasonable accounts related to approval. The interpreters from the Mu'tazilites and other sects have followed this kind of interpretation and ignored the sayings of the infallible Imams concerning the interpretation of the Qur'an. For their interpretations they depended on that which they approved reasonably.³

The first school of *tafsir* seems to have existed at the time of Imam Ali (as) who was the first interpreter of the Qur'an and from whom Abdullah bin Abbas and other great companions took their interpretation.⁴ The infallible Imams (as) paid much attention to the *tafsir* of the Qur'an through their lectures on interpretation, the reasons behind the revelation of the Qur'anic verses and the merit of reciting the Qur'an.

3. *Hadith*

The Hadith is one of the most important sources of Islamic legislation. The Hadith is the tradition transmitted from the Prophet (sawas) or the infallible Imams whether these be their sayings, actions or their approval of others' sayings or doings. It is called the Sunna.

The Shia were the first to write down the traditions and the infallible Imams (as) encouraged their companions to do so. Abu Basir said, "Once, I went to Abu Abdullah (al-Sadiq) and he said, 'What prevents you from writing down traditions? You will not memorize them

1. Al-Saffar, Basa'ir al-Darajat p. 213, Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:228/hadith 2.

2. At-Tibyan 1:4.

3. Al-Wafi 1:15-16. Qawanin al-usul pp. 397-398; Faraid al-usul 1:139-142; Al-Jasas, Ahkam al-Qur'an 3:246-254.

4. Al-Tabarsi, Tafsir Majma'a al-Bayan 1:36.

unless you write them down. Some people from Basra have just left. They asked about some things and wrote down the answers.'¹

The companions of Imam al-Rida (as) wrote down all the true traditions in large volumes which were the first collections of the Shia that were the basis for the four collections of the three Shaykhs.²

4. *Jurisprudence*

Of the most distinct sciences prevailing at that time and all through the Islamic ages, jurisprudence was the one which explained to people their obligations and their responsibility before Allah in following these obligations during their lives. More care went into the study of jurisprudence than other sciences. The infallible Imams of Household (as) had a significant role in establishing their jurisprudential school from which great jurists and ulama graduated such as Zurara, Muhammad bin Muslim, Jabir bin Yazid al-Ju'fi and other great ulama. These jurists recorded all that they had heard from the infallible Imams (as) in their books, which numbered some four hundred, and then they were edited and collected in the four famous books to which the Shia jurists refer in deriving the legal verdicts.

This activity of eagerly seeking and learning jurisprudence was not limited to the Shia, but occurred in all the Islamic sects.

5. *Usul*

The branch of Usul had been established by Imam Abu Ja'far al-Baqir (as). *Ijtihad* and the deriving of legal verdicts depend on this science which was studied widely in that age.³

6. *Grammar*

Grammar played an important role in the Abbasid age. Its studies were a point of argumentation. In the palaces of the caliphs, meetings

1. Al-Tabarsi, Tafsir Majma'a al-Bayan 1:36.

2. Mushkat al-Anwar p. 249/hadith 1; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 2:153/hadith 47.

3. Baqir al-Qurashi, The Life of Imam Muhammad al-Baqir p. 184.

were held on this matter and sharp disputes took place between grammarians. Many famous scholars had specialized in this science at the head of whom were al-Kisayi, al-Farra and Sibawayh. This branch of knowledge had been established by Imam Ali (as)¹, the pioneer of knowledge and wisdom on earth.

7. Theology

Among the studies prevailing in that age was theology. Theology means the study of religious belief. This art had been established by the infallible imams of Household (as) and then some of their disciples specialized in it. At the head was the great scholar Hisham bin al-Hakam and among the famous Sunni theologians were Wasil bin Ata', Abul Huthayl al-'Allaf, Abu al-Hasan al-Ash'ari and al-Ghazali.²

8. Medicine

Medicine developed enormously in the Abbasid age and the Abbasid kings encouraged people to study it. They gave prizes and great monies to those specialized in medicine such as the physician Gibril bin Bakhtsho' al-Nasrani.³

9. Chemistry

Among the sciences that gained great attention in that age was chemistry. Jabir bin Haian, the pride of the Arabic east, had specialized in this branch and received his information from Imam al-Sadiq (as)⁴, the thinking mind of humanity. It was he who had established this science. This was in addition to civil engineering, architecture and astronomy.

1. Al-Aghani 12:348.

2. Baqir al-Qurashi, The Life of Imam Muhammad al-Baqir pp. 185-186.

3. Ibid p. 186.

4. Al-Fihrist p. 420.

Architecture and Civil Engineering Sciences

Astronomy Translation

Among the aspects of the development of the cultural life at that time was an interest in translating books from foreign languages into Arabic. Translated books were on medicine, mathematics, astronomy, philosophy and politics. The head of the divan of translation was Hunayn bin Ishaq. Ibn al-Nadim had mentioned many of these translated books in his book *al-Fihrist*. Ibn al-Nadim said, 'Between al-Mamun and the king of Rome there were correspondences. Once, al-Mamun wrote to the king of Rome asking his permission to send him what he would choose from the ancient sciences kept in the country of the Romans. The king responded to him after he had initially refused. Then, al-Mamun sent some men, among whom were al-Hajjaj bin Matar, Ibnul Batriq, Salim the chief of Bayt al-Hikmah (the house of wisdom) and others, to Rome. When they came back carrying with them scientific books, he ordered them to translate the books into Arabic and the books were translated.'¹

Institutes and Libraries

The Abbasid government had established schools and institutes in Baghdad to teach the Islamic branches of knowledge and other sciences. About thirty schools had been established in Baghdad and each of them was more wonderful than a wonderful palace.²

Many libraries had also been established in Baghdad such as the library of Bayt al-Hikmah, to which al-Rashid had conveyed his private library and added to it the books his father al-Mahdi and those collected by his grandfather al-Mansur. During his reign, al-Mamun asked the emir of Sicilia for some scientific and philosophical books. When the books arrived, he took them to the library of Bayt al-Hikmah. He also brought many books to this library from Khurasan. Whenever he heard of a book, he added it to this library. This library was the richest one in the world which researchers and students always referred to. This remained so until the Mongols attacked and

1. Ibid p. 339.

2. Rihlat ibn Jabir al-Kanani p. 208.

occupied Baghdad. They destroyed the library with all its books and thus the Islamic world lost its greatest heritage.¹

Maps and Observations

Among the indications of cultural and civilizational development in that age was that al-Mamun had ordered a map of the world to be drawn which was called (al-Surah al-Ma'monia-the Mamuni picture). It was the first map of the world to be drawn in the Abbasid age. Al-Mamun also ordered an observatory to be built. It was built in al-Shamasia, a quarter in Baghdad.²

In this prosperous, scientific atmosphere, Imam al-Jawad (as) was the pioneer of the cultural movement. Scholars and scientists gathered around him feasting on the springs of his knowledge and asking him the most intricate questions on philosophy and theology and they received satisfactory answers from him.³

2. Political life

The political life at the time of Imam Abu Ja'far al-Jawad (as) was ugly and absolutely critical not only regarding Imam al-Jawad (as), but also to all Muslims. The *umma* had been afflicted with violent waves of sedition and troubles. Before discussing those events, it is necessary to talk about the system of rule in the Abbasid age and some other matters that relate to the subject.

The System of the Rule

The system of Abbasid rule was the same as the Umayyad rule. It did not change. Nicholson described it as despotic and said that the Abbasids had absolute rule over the nation like that of the Sassanian kings before them.⁴

1. Tarikh al-Islam al-siyasi wa al-dini wa al-thaqafi wa al-ijtima'i 4:160-162; Masudi, al-Tanbih wa al-Ishraf p. 46.

2. Asr (the age of) al-Ma'mun 1:375.

3. The Life of Imam Muhammad al-Baqir, Baqir al-Qurashi pp.179-188.

4. Ittijahat al-Shi'ar al-Arabi (the course of Arabic poetry) p. 49.

The rule was according to the desires and fancies of the Abbasid kings and their emirs, paying no attention to Islamic law. Their administrative, economical, and political conduct had deviated from what Islam had legislated.

The Abbasid kings were arbitrary with the affairs of Muslims. They imposed on them a terroristic rule devoid of mercy or kindness that was too far from the Islamic caliphate which had been legislated to spread justice, equality and truth between people.

The Caliphate and Heredity

The Islamic caliphate with its original principle did not submit to any rule of heredity, nepotism or tendencies and fancies. Islam had fought all these things and considered them facets of corruption and intellectual backwardness. Islam had established the caliphate on noble values, high ideals and the power to run the affairs of Muslims justly. Whoever had these qualities would be qualified to undertake this serious position on which the safety and happiness of the nation depended.

As for the Shia, they saw that the caliphate was the right of the infallible imams of the Household (as) not because they were the close relatives of the Prophet (sawas), but because of their excellence, virtues and talents that no one other than them had ever had. Certainly there are numerous traditions about the government and rule being the right of the Household (as); and after studying them no one can claim the Abbasid rulers to be the rightful people for this post.

Like Ummayyads, Abbasid caliphs also changed caliphate into a heredity object and considered themselves to be fit for this post forever as they thought of themselves as the cousins of the Prophet (sawas). They spent much money on media to make people believe in what they wanted.

On the other hand, the king's pensioners also degraded the Alawis and supported the Abbasid family as they were commanded to do so; They tried to strengthen their relation with the Abbasid family to gain

greater financial support and thus magnified the cruel Abbasid kings as the members of the family of the holy Prophet (as).¹

Unusual Conduct

When the Abbasids kept to the hereditary system of rule, they did many unusual and strange things which were not to the advantage of the nation.

They entrusted their children with the caliphate while they were not yet adult. Al-Rashid entrusted his son al-Amin with the caliphate while he was five years old and another son, al-Mamun, when he was thirteen². These two future caliphs did not have any knowledge, political ability and power to control the country and were guided by other members of their court in their governmental affairs.

It seems necessary to mention here that the post of Imamah and succession of the Prophet (sawas) is a divine gift; and only those are capable of such posts who are free from selfishness, error and deviation in all fields of their lives. Only they are able to guide the Islamic Ummah on the right path. On the other hand, Abbasid caliphs chose another method for their caliphate. They neglected all the qualities and requirements necessary according to Islam for the post of caliphate such as intelligence, wisdom, self-possession and complete awareness of the needs of the society. They therefore deviated from the real path of caliphate and took charge of it only for the fulfilment of their own inclinations.

They appointed more than one person in the position of heir apparent at the same time, which would separate the nation and destroy its unity. Al-Rashid had entrusted the caliphate to both of his sons, al-Amin and al-Mamun³, and after his death this resulted in their fighting each other and involving the nation in serious crises and dangerous sedition that we shall discuss in the next chapters.

1. Baqir al-Qurashi, *The Life of Imam Muhammad al-Baqir* pp.188-189.

2. *Tarikh al-Khulafa* p. 290.

3. Al-Mas'udi, *Muruj al-Dhahab* 3:366.

Vizierate

Among the most important bodies in the Abbasid state was the vizierate. It was, in most cases, a vizierate of authorization; the caliph authorized his vizier to run all the affairs of state while he occupied himself with amusement, play and insolence. Al-Mahdi, the Abbasid caliph, had appointed Yaqub bin Dawud as his vizier and entrusted him with all the affairs of his subjects and he turned to pleasures¹. Al-Rashid had made Yahya bin Khalid al-Barmaki his vizier and given him absolute authority and he turned to his pleasures and lusts, and his red nights in Baghdad bore witness to that.

Yahya ran the affairs of the vast state according to his wishes. He spent vast sums on the poets who praised him. He possessed buildings and gardens that yielded millions of dinars and that was the reason for Harun ar-Rashid's incarcerating him, killing his son, Ja'far, and confiscating all their property.

Al-Mamun let his vizier al-Fadhl bin Sahl² do whatever he liked in the state. He became extremely wealthy through plundering and taking bribes. The nation suffered misfortune and hardship under these viziers. They were the striking force over the public. The caliphs used them as a means to subject the people, plunder their wealth and force them to do what they did not wish.

The viziers were liable to rant and rage because of the injustice and oppression they created. Di'bil al-Khiza'iy had advised al-Fadhl bin Marwan, a vizier of the Abbasids, and recommended him to do good and to be kind to people. He had mentioned to him as examples three of the viziers who had had the same name as him and preceded him in this position: al-Fadhl bin Yahya, al-Fadhl bin al-Rabi' and al-Fadhl bin Sahl. When they were unjust and oppressive, they met wrath and revenge.

Among the strange events of treason that those viziers committed was that one day al-Khaqani, the vizier of Mu'tazid Abbasi, appointed

1. Al-Mas'udi, Al-Tanbih wa al-Ishraf p. 366.

2. Wafiat al-A'ayan 4:41.

nineteen supervisors in Kufa and took bribes from each one of them.¹ Many such scandals and bad deeds were committed by the viziers of the Abbasids.

Persecuting the Alawites

Most of the Abbasid governments persecuted the Alawis officially and openly treated them with absolute severity and violence. The Alawis faced torture that they had never faced under the Umayyad rule. The first one to open the door of evil and severe punishment against the Alawis was the Pharaoh of this Ummah; al-Mansur al-Dawaniqi² who said: "I have killed from the progeny of Fatima³ one thousand or more and left their master and guardian, Ja'far bin Muhammad (al-Sadiq)."⁴

He was the keeper of the wardrobe of the heads of the Alawis which he had left to his son al-Mahdi to fix his rule. That wardrobe included heads of children, young and old men from the Alawis.⁵

It was he who had put the masters of the Alawis in his horrible prisons until evil smells killed them,⁶ and he tore down prisons on some of them until they died. This tyrant shedder of blood had committed all kinds of massacres against the Alawis. During his rule they suffered such terrible kinds of torment and punishment that were beyond description.

As for Musa al-Hadi, the other Abbasid caliph, he did worse than al-Mansur. He was the man of the event of Jurisprudence which was not less than the event of Karbala in its terrible scenes. This shedder of blood had committed incomparable crimes. He had ordered the children and the captives to be killed. He kept on chasing the Alawis

1. Tarikh al-Tamaddun al-Islami (history of Islamic civilization) 4:182.

2. Tarikh al-Khulafa (the history of the caliphs) by as-Sayoti p. 261.

3. The daughter of the Prophet (sawas).

4. Al-Tusi, al-Thaqib fi'l-Manaqib p. 208/hadith 81.

5. Tarikh al-Tabari 6:344.

6. Al-Mas'udi, Muruj al-Dhahab 3:311.

and killed whoever he caught. The days of this tyrant lasted until Allah killed him.¹

As for Harun al-Rashid, he was no less than his predecessors in his enmity towards the Household (as) and in persecuting them. He said, 'Until when shall I be patient with the progeny of Abu Talib? By Allah, I will kill them and kill their followers and I will continue to do so!'² It was he who had imprisoned Imam Musa bin Ja'far for many years and then poisoned him until he died in prison.³ Al-Rashid did his best to oppress the Alawis. During his reign, the Alawis suffered no less than what they had suffered during the days of al-Mansoor.

When al-Mamun was caliph, he stopped following the Alawis, assigned dues to them and took care of them. However, this did not last long because after he had assassinated Imam al-Rida (as), he resumed the practice of chasing and oppressing them as his predecessors had done.⁴

However, the greatest political problem which Muslims had to face was the oppression against the Household (as). They suffered hunger and starvation out of poverty and neediness.⁵ Many misfortunes afflicted the Household (as) at that period and, of course, they caused great sorrow and distress to Imam al-Jawad (as).⁶

The Createdness of the Qur'an

Perhaps one of the most complicated political problems that Muslims faced at that time was the problem of 'the creation of the Qur'an' which caused sedition and misfortune to the nation.

Al-Mamun put forth this question in 212 A.H. and tried the ulama with it terribly. Whoever did not believe in al-Mamun would be

1. Al-Mas'udi, Muruj al-Dhahab 6:339; Tarikh al-Tabari 6:410-415.

2. Al-Aghani 5:237.

3. Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:237-243.

4. Al-Mas'udi, Muruj al-Dhahab 4:32.

5. Al-Hada'iq al-Wardiah 2:220.

6. Baqir al-Qurashi, The Life of Imam Muhammad al-Baqir, pp. 203-205.

imprisoned, exiled or killed.¹ He forced people to believe in his thought through subjection and punishment.

This question is considered to be one of the most dangerous events of that age. Philosophers and theologians have explained and clarified its ambiguities.²

3. Economic Life

Islam has always attempted with its rulings to develop the economical life of people and allow it to flourish. Islam considered poverty a destructive disaster to be removed. Islam has bound rulers and leaders to try their best to improve the general economy of the nation, to increase the income of individuals and to spread ease and luxury among people, so that Muslims would be far from corruption and deviation which would result in poverty and deprivation. Islam had made it impermissible for rulers and leaders to spend the wealth of the nation on anything other than that which is to the advantage of Muslims and prohibited them from having a hold on this wealth for themselves, their relatives and companions. Nevertheless, the Abbasid rulers contradicted the orders of Islam and took people as their slaves and the wealth of the Muslims as theirs. They spent the wealth of the nation on their pleasures and amusements caring neither for Allah nor for His people. This destructive policy caused many crises to the general economy. The society had divided into two classes; one class of the excessively wealthy who had nothing to do save enjoy pleasures and amusements, and the other class of labouring people who worked in agriculture and other industries and suffered hardship for the sake of their wealthy masters in order to get morsels from the tables of those masters. The result of this imbalance in economic life was loss of stability in both political and social

1. Tarikh al-Tabari 7:188; Tarikh al-Khulafa p. 310-311; Asr (the age of) al-Ma'mun.

2. Life of Imam Jawad (as), p. 205.

fields.¹ At this point we shall discuss some aspects of economic life in that age.

The Income of the State

The income of the Islamic state during the Abbasid age in which Imam al-Jawad (as) lived was enormous. Ibn Khaldun stated that the land tax at the reign of al-Mamun was about 400 million dirhams.² The wealth was so abundant that money was not counted but weighed. The wali of al-Mu'tasim (the Abbasid caliph) regarding Rome had counted the land tax of that country and found it less than three million. Al-Mu'tasim wrote to him saying, 'The land tax of the worst village which contains the worst of my slaves is more than that of your land.'³

Unfortunately, this great wealth was not spent on the development of Muslims but the greatest part of it was spent on pleasures and lust. This great wealth reflecting the life of luxurious Baghdad witnessed at that time can be seen in the stories of The Arabian Nights.

Striving to collect Wealth

At that time, people strove to collect wealth by any means whether lawful or otherwise. Wealth had become the criterion of men's values. People were desperate to amass wealth by any means without refraining from unlawfulness or vices. Cheating and deception were the best means of collecting monies.⁴

Accumulation of Wealth

Plentiful wealth had been accumulated by some people especially in Baghdad which was the capital of the Islamic nation. A class of capitalists, who owned great wealth, was to be found there. Basra also had a large class of wealthy people who had abundant wealth, for

1. Al-Idarah al-Islamiyyah fi Izz al-Arab (Islamic administration in the glory of the Arabs) p. 82.

2. Muqaddimat ibn Khaldun pp.179-180.

3. Al-Maqdisi, Ahsan al-Ta'asim p. 64.

4. The introduction of al-Bukhala' (the stingy) p.24; Baqir al-Qurashi, The Life of Imam Muhammad al-Baqir, p. 207.

Basra was the port of Iraq and the important commercial centre that connected the East with the West. It received the trade of India and the islands of the eastern seas. Therefore, Basra was called "the land of India" and "the mother of Iraq".¹

The Expenditure for al-Mamun's Marriage

Among the lavish expenditure and waste was that associated with al-Mamun's marriage to Lady Puran. He had given her one million dinars as dowry. Her father, al-Hasan bin Sahl, had stipulated that al-Mamun should perform the wedding in his (the bride's father's) village lying in Fam al-Sulh and al-Mamun had agreed. When al-Mamun went to marry, he travelled to Fam al-Sulh. He wasted one million dinars on the army travelling with him. There were thirty thousand young and old male servants and seven thousand maids with him. The army included three hundred foot soldiers and one hundred knights.

Al-Hasan bin Sahl, the bride's father, slaughtered some thirty thousand sheep, sixty thousand chickens, four hundred cows and four hundred camels for his guests. People called that invitation "the invitation of Islam." However the fact is that Islam is free from such irresponsible behaviour. Islam has prohibited spending funds from the Muslim treasury on anything that has no advantage for Muslims.

When al-Mamun married Puran, small balls of ambergris were scattered from above the roof of al-Hasan bin Sahl's house. People disregarded these balls at first. Then, a man from above the roof called out, 'Whoever has a ball let him open it and he will find a piece of paper inside it. Whatever is written in the paper will be his.' People opened the balls and found small papers in them. Some of them had prizes of one thousand dinars, some of five hundred dinars and so on down to one hundred dinars. Some of them had a prize of a horse, some had ten silk garments, five garments, a male servant, or a maid. Whoever got that piece of paper went to the divan and received that

1. Baqir al-Qurashi, *The Life of Imam Muhammad al-Baqir*, pp. 207-208.

which had been written on it.¹ He had spent on the leaders of his army some fifty million dirhams.²

When the moment of wedding came, Puran was seated on a mat of gold. Then, al-Mamun with his aunts and some Abbasid women came in to her. Al-Hasan bin Sahl scattered above the heads of al-Mamun and his wife three hundred pearls each of them weighing one unit. No one stretched his hand to take any. Then al-Mamun asked his aunts to take them and he himself took one, but one of the Abbasid women took it from him.

Al-Hasan bin Sahl and al-Mamun had spent these enormous amounts on the marriage, all taken from the treasury of the Muslims which Allah had ordered to be spent on improving the people's lives and ridding them of poverty and wretchedness.

Gifts and Donations

The Abbasid kings gifted the monies of the Muslims to singers, songstresses, their servants and agents. Once, Ibrahim bin al-Mahdi the Abbasid sang a song to the caliph Muhammad al-Amin and he gave him three hundred million dirhams. Ibrahim found that too much and said, 'O my master, would that you have ordered twenty million dirhams!' The caliph said, 'Is it but the land tax of just one village?' One day, Ibn Muhriz sang a song before al-Rashid who was affected by the song and gave one hundred thousand dirhams to the singer. He gave the same to the singer, Dahman al-Ashqar.³ When al-Mahdi became caliph, he distributed all that which was in one of the wardrobes of the treasury among his servants⁴ besides many gifts and donations that were given from the treasury which had been ordered to be spent on vital projects to develop the nation.

1. Tarikh al-Tabari 7:178-180; Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh 5:210-211; Wafiat al-A'ayan 1:278-290.

2. Al-Islam wa al-Hadhara al-Arabia 2:231.

3. Al-Mustatraf p. 182-184.

4. Tarikh Baghdad 5:393.

Possession of Maids

Instead of the Abbasids building and developing the nation and improving the economy, they turned greedily to possessing maids and buying them to excess. Beautiful maids were brought to Baghdad from all corners of the world; from Abyssinia, Rome, Georgia, and half-blood Arab women from Madinah, Ta'if, Yamama and Egypt who were eloquent and quick-witted.¹ Al-Rashid had about two thousand maids and al-Mutawakkil had about four thousand.²

One day, al-Rashid visited the Barmakids and, when he wanted to leave, their maids went out and stood in two rows like an army. They were singing and playing lutes and tambourines up to the last gate of the palace.³

The mother of Ja'far al-Barmaki had one hundred female slaves who each wore different dresses and jewels.⁴ Possessing maids in such great numbers was the result of abundant wealth accumulated by the people of this capitalist class which did not know how to rightly spend.

Diversity in Building

The Abbasid kings diversified when building their palaces. They built huge palaces that no one had ever seen the like of before. In Baghdad they built the palace of al-Khuld to resemble the Garden of al-Khuld that Allah had promised the pious. Among the great buildings was the palace that al-Amin had built. Historians said it was white, and decorated with pure gold and azurite. It had great gates with shining gold nails on which there were precious jewels. It was furnished with rugs as red as blood. It had pictures and statues of gold with ambergris and camphor.⁵

1. Hadharat al-Islam p. 98.

2. Al-Aghani 9:88.

3. Hadharat al-Islam fi Dar al-Salam p. 96.

4. Al-Jahshiyari Al-wazara wa al-Kitab p. 246.

5. Ibnul Mu'tazz, Tabaqat al-Shu'ara p. 209.

Ja'far al-Barmaki spent about twenty million dirhams on the building of his house. People built palaces of such lavishness and luxury at that time that many of the doors of houses in Baghdad were made of gold, while the majority of the nation suffered hunger and deprivation.

Furniture in Houses

The palaces of the Abbasids were furnished with the most precious and splendid furniture in the world. Historians said that Lady Zubayda had chosen a carpet which had pictures of animals and birds of all kinds made of gold and the eyes of those animals and birds were from corundum and other precious stones. It was said that she spent about one million dinars on this carpet.¹ Her other furniture was made of gold inlaid with jewels and precious stones, ebony and sandalwood with gold and all kinds of silk. She used candles of ambergris and wore shoes inlaid with jewels and gems.²

As for the meetings of the Barmakids, they were amazing. When al-Rashid attended the meetings of the Barmakids, and while he was among gold vessels and silk sofas and maids strutting in silk and jewels, receiving him with aromatic perfumes the like of which he did not know, he imagined that he was in Paradise.³

Clothes

As a result of the lavishness and luxury of the Abbasids, they had established in their palaces small factories to manufacture cloth called Dar al-Tiraz. The officer in charge managed the affairs of workers, tools and salaries.⁴

Foods

Due to the development of civilization, foods and meals diversified. Tayfur mentioned that once Ja'far bin Muhammad al-Antaki lunched with al-Mamun and three hundred kinds of food were put on the

1. Hadharat al-Islam p.95; as quoted from al-Mustatraf p. 96.

2. Ibid p. 95.

3. Hadharat al-Islam p. 96.

4. Muqaddimat ibn Khaldun p. 267.

table.¹ Because of the various kinds of food, their teeth decayed and so they filled them with gold.²

The Wealth Left by the Abbasids

The Abbasid kings and their viziers left immeasurable wealth after them:

1. The stingy tyrant al-Mansur al-Dawaniqi left some 600 million dirhams and 14 million dinars that he had stolen from the Muslims.³ He had accumulated these great monies in his treasuries and left poverty and wretchedness to prevail over all the Islamic countries.
2. Al-Rashid left about 900 million dirhams.⁴
3. Al-Khayzuran was al-Rashid's mother. On her death she left some one million and sixty thousand dirhams.⁵
4. Amr bin Su'da was one of the viziers of al-Mamun. He left about eight million dirhams. Al-Mamun was informed of this on a piece of paper and he wrote on the paper, 'This is little for one who worked for us and his service to us was long. May Allah bless them for his children.'⁶

The Life of Amusement and Diversion

Most of the Abbasid caliphs lived a life of amusement, diversion and debauchery without thinking of Allah or the afterlife. They surrounded themselves with pleasures, lusts and trivial leisure and singing.

Ahmed bin Sadaqa said, 'I went to al-Mamun on the day of al-Sa'anin.'⁷ There were twenty Roman maids before him. They were in

1. Tarikh Baghdad by Tayfur p. 36.

2. Social and economical organizations (al-Tandhimat al-Ijtima'iyyah wa al-Iqtisadiyyah) by Salih Ahmad p. 177.

3. Umara' al-Shi'ar al-Arabi (Emirs of Arabic poetry) p.45.

4. Ibid.

5. Islam and the Arabic Civilization 2:230.

6. Ibid p. 231.

7. Yum al-Sha'anin (A feast of the Christians).

silk and had gold crosses around their necks and leaves of palm and olive in their hands. Al-Mamun said, 'O Ahmad, you have composed some verses about these maids. Come on! Sing them!' Ahmad began singing and al-Mamun kept on drinking while the maids danced before him.¹

Books of history and literature are replete with the stories of their amusement, play, debauchery, libertinism and their disregard for the affairs of the general Muslims.

They played backgammon and chess. They bred doves and exaggerated their prices.² They staged cockfights and dogfights as a form of entertainment.³ They practised gambling which spread even to the saloons of the poor.⁴

Unfortunately, singing, play and debauchery even extended to some orators who were required to be pious and devout. Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi said of the orator Muhammad bin al-Dhaw' that he was not reliable as a source of knowledge because he drank wine and practiced adultery openly. Abu Nu'as, the poet, visited him in Kufa in the house of a vintner called Jabir.⁵

Asceticism

Besides the life of diversion and debauchery that people lived in the time of Imam al-Jawad (as), there was another group of people who turned to asceticism and set the pleasures of life aside. Among these people was Ibrahim bin al-Adham who had left a life of luxury and turned to the obedience of Allah. He often recited,

'Take Allah as your friend,
And leave people aside.'

1. Al-Aghani 19:138.

2. Hayat al-Haywan (life of animals) 3:91.

3. Al-Aghani 6:75.

4. Hayat al-Haywan 5:115.

5. Al-Awraq p. 61.

During the winters, he wore a sheepskin¹ and did not wear anything under it so that he could show his disinclination towards the world.

Ma'aruf al-Karkhi and Bishr bin al-Harith were also among the famous ascetic people at that time. They would weep in the mornings and recited these verses:

"What do the sins want from me? Why have they fallen in love with me and why do they leave me not?

What will happen to them if they desert me because I have grown old?"²

Bashr bin Harith known as Bashr Hafi was another famous poet of his time. Some of his verses are:

"To pass the days and the nights in rags, while the people are worried and in trouble;

It is better for me than I will be told tomorrow [on the Day of Judgment]: I have asked neediness from my creature.

They will say: have you thought it enough to live [such a pious life]? And then I will say: contentment is in satiety, not in abundance of property and dinars.

I am content with all difficulties and welfare given by Allah; and I will not walk but on the brightest ways."³

Of course, the call to asceticism had come from the excessive diversion, debauchery and libertinism of the Abbasid kings and the capitalist class and their not refraining from what Allah had prohibited.

With these words we conclude our description of the era of Imam Jawad (as).⁴

1. Huli'at al-Aliya 7:367-373.

2. Al-Dahabi, Sirat I'alam al-Nubala 9:342.

3. Huli'at al-Aliya 8:354.

4. Refer to: Imam Jawad (as)'s life pp. 206-216.

Until now, we have discussed the cultural, political, economical and social conditions and specialties of Imam Jawad's (as) time. In the next chapter, we will discuss the nature of Imam's (as) relation with his contemporary rulers. In the following chapter, we will study the needs and requirements of that age and consider what is specific to that particular era; also, we will study Imam Jawad's (as) mission under those conditions while bearing his targets in mind. We will study all these with relation to Imam Jawad (as) as a person belonging to the Household of the Prophet (as). It must also be borne in mind that the members of this purified family were given the responsibility of bringing peace to the Prophet's (sawas) mission and the Islamic nation; the peace whose good news had been given by Islam which not only wanted the faithful believers and the Muslims but also the humanity to enjoy this blessing.

CHAPTER TWO

IMAM JAWAD (AS) AND HIS CONTEMPORARY RULERS

Imam Jawad (as) was a contemporary of two caliphs; al-Mamun and al-Mu'tasim.

1. Al-Mamun Abbasi

Just as he had showed great respect for Imam al-Rida (as) and other Alawis – though it was all fake – al-Mamun continued to show the same feeling for Imam Jawad (as) which was once again the result of his cunning. He married his daughter to Imam Jawad (as) so that he could become nearer to Imam Jawad (as). While he displayed great respect and friendship towards the Household (as), and especially towards Imam Jawad (as), at the same time he was trying to degrade Imam Jawad (as) by any possible means. Also, he wanted him to be under the control of the caliph. This is what we can find in al-Mamun's behaviour with Imam al-Rida (as). Actually, al-Mamun's behaviour towards Imam Jawad (as) was the same adverse behaviour which he showed towards his father Imam al-Rida (as). A noticeable crack in the relation of Imam Jawad (as) and al-Mamun is something which we will study in this chapter.

Imam Jawad (as) Marries al-Mamun's Daughter

Historians have mentioned the reaction of the Abbasid family to the marriage of Imam Jawad (as) with al-Mamun's daughter: When al-Mamun decided to marry his daughter, Umm al-Fadhl, to Abu Ja'far Muhammad bin Ali (as), he let the Abbasids know of his intention. For the Abbasid family it was very hard to accept al-Mamun's action and they started criticizing him. What the Abbasids were afraid of was the caliphate, which they thought would be seized by Imam Jawad (as), and the story of his father (as) would be repeated. They discussed this many times. At last a group of al-Mamun's relations went to him and said: "O Amir al-Muminin, we adjure you by Allah to give up marrying your daughter to the son of al-Rida. We fear you

will take a matter that Allah has endowed us with away from us and remove the honour which Allah has bestowed on us. You have known what has been there between us and these people in the past and now and how the caliphs have exiled them and belittled them. We are in fear of what you have done with al-Rida. We ask you by Allah not to take us back to a distress that has abated. Give up your intention with the son of al-Rida and choose one from your family who would be more suitable."

Al-Mamun said to them: "As for that which is between you and the family of Abu Talib (the Alawis), the fault is yours. If you had done justice to them, it would have been better for you for they are closest to you. And as for that which those before me have done to them, they cut kinship and I seek the protection of Allah from that. By Allah, I have not regretted my appointing him as my heir apparent. I had asked him to undertake the matter (the caliphate) and I would retire but he refused; and the command of Allah is a decree that is made absolute."

And as for Abu Ja'far Muhammad bin Ali (al-Jawad), I have chosen him because he is the best of all people in knowledge and virtue though he is still young and I have admired this in him. I hope that which I have known in him will appear to people and then they will know that what I have done is right.

Then the Abbasids asked al-Mamun to delay the marriage until Imam al-Jawad (as) had grown older and become more aware of religion.

Al-Mamun replied "Woe unto you! I know this young man better than you. He is from people of a house whose knowledge is from Allah who has inspired them. His fathers have been rich in the knowledge of religion and sciences and have not been in need of imperfect people. If you like, you can test Abu Ja'far to discover what I have described about him."

The Abbasids said to al-Mamun: O Amir al-Muminin, we agree to test him. Let us alone with him and we shall appoint someone to question him in your presence on some subjects in Sharia

jurisprudence. If he answers correctly, we shall have no objection to his marriage and the opinion of Amir al-Muminin will appear right to people, and if he fails to answer we shall have the right to object.¹

The Abbasids went looking for a scientific personality that would be able to test Imam al-Jawad (as) and confute him.

The Abbasids had agreed to choose Yahya bin Aktham, who was the head of the judges of Baghdad and one of the prominent jurists at that time, to test Imam Abu Ja'far (as). They offered their suggestions and told him that they would give him much money if he tried Imam al-Jawad (as) and confuted him. Yahya responded and left for his house looking in books of jurisprudence and Hadith for the most complicated questions to test Imam al-Jawad (as). The Abbasids went to al-Mamun and told him that Yahya had accepted the offer and they asked him to select a day for the test.

When the day of the test came, the Abbasids hurried to the palace of al-Mamun. Notables, scholars and people of all classes attended the meeting. It was a memorable day. The meeting hall was full of people. Imam al-Jawad (as), who was nine years and a few months old at that time, took his seat at the front as al-Mamun had ordered, Yahya sat before him and al-Mamun sat beside him.

The attendants paid attention and Yahya asked al-Mamun permission to begin testing Imam al-Jawad (as). Yahya turned towards Imam al-Jawad (as) and said to him, 'Would you permit me - may I die for you - to ask you a question?'

Imam al-Jawad (as) smiled at him saying, 'Ask whatever you like.'

Yahya asked, 'May Allah make me die for you! What do you say about a *muhrim* who killed game?'

Imam al-Jawad (as) said: 'Did he kill the game while being in his *ihram* or not? Was he aware of that or not? Did he kill it intentionally or not? Was the *muhrim* a free person or a slave? Was he a child or an adult? Was the game from birds or another animal? Was it young or adult? Did the *muhrim* insist on doing this and did he repent? Was it

1. Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad pp.359-360.

at night or by day? Was the *muhrim* in the major *haji* or in the minor *haji*?'

When al-Mamun saw that Yahya had failed, he turned to the Abbasids and said, 'Praise be to Allah for this blessing and for the success of my opinion do you now know what you have denied?'

Al-Mamun turned to Imam al-Jawad (as) and said, O Abu Ja'far, do you propose (to my daughter)?'

Imam al-Jawad (as) showed acceptance and then al-Mamun said to him, 'May I die for you! I have accepted you. Propose and I will marry my daughter Ummul Fadhl to you even if some people object to that.'

Then Imam al-Jawad (as) made the speech of engagement saying, 'Praise be to Allah as an acknowledgment of His blessing, and there is no god but Allah as loyalty to His oneness, and the blessing and peace of Allah be on the master of His people and the choice of his progeny. Among the favours of Allah on His people is that He has satisfied them with lawful (marriage) rather than unlawful (adultery). He, glory be to Him, has said:

﴿وَأَنْكِحُوا الْأَيَامَىٰ مِنْكُمْ وَالصَّالِحِينَ مِنْ عِبَادِكُمْ وَإِمَائِكُمْ ۚ إِنْ يَكُونُوا فُقَرَاءَ يُغْنِهِمُ اللَّهُ مِنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ وَاللَّهُ وَاسِعٌ عَلِيمٌ﴾

*"And marry those among you who are single and those who are fit among your male slaves and your female slaves; if they are needy, Allah will make them free from want by His grace; and Allah is All Bountiful, All Knowing."*¹

Thus Muhammad bin Ali bin Musa proposed to Umm al-Fadhl the daughter of Abdullah al-Mamun and offered her a dowry equal to the dowry of his grandmother, Fatima the daughter of Muhammad: five hundred dirhams and horses. O Amir al-Muminin, do you accept marrying your daughter to me with this dowry?'

1. *Surat al-Nur*, 24:32.

Al-Mamun said, 'Yes, I marry her to you, O Abu Ja'far, with the mentioned dowry. Do you accept the marriage?'

Imam al-Jawad (as) said, 'Yes, I accept it and am satisfied with it.'

Al-Mamun ordered the attendants with their different ranks and classes to sit and not to leave the meeting. Raian says: "It was only a little later that we heard voices like those of sailors and captains. Suddenly we saw slaves pulling a [small] boat made of silver with ropes made of silk; the boat was on the back of a horse. This boat was filled with perfume. Al-Mamun ordered the gentlefolk to tinge dye their beard with it. Then the boat was placed before the rest of the people and they also applied perfume from it. Then the tablecloths were spread and everyone ate. Then everyone was given prizes by the caliph according to their posts.

When the people left and only a group of gentlemen remained with the caliph, he said to Abu Ja'far: May I die for you, it will be better if you explain in detail the jurisprudential problem which was asked earlier so that we will understand and benefit from it. Imam al-Jawad (as) said, 'If a *muhrim* kills game while being free from his *ihram* and the game is an adult bird, he has to pay one sheep as penance. If he does that during his *ihram*, the penance is doubled. If he kills a chick while being free from *ihram*, he has to pay a weaned lamb and does not have to pay its price because he is not in *ihram*. If he kills it in his *ihram*, he must pay a lamb and the price of the chick. If the game is an animal, he has to pay a cow or a camel for killing a wild donkey or an ostrich. If he kills a deer, the penance will be a sheep. If he kills the game while being in *ihram*, the penance is doubled as an offering to be brought to the Ka'aba. He must slaughter the animal (of the penance) in Mina where people slaughter their sacrifices if he is on the great *hajj* and he must slaughter it in Mecca in the yard of the Ka'aba if he is in the minor *hajj*. There is no difference in paying penance when it comes to whether the man is learned or uneducated. Whether a *muhrim* kills game knowingly or unknowingly, intentionally or unintentionally, he has to pay penance for it. If a slave commits the act, his master must pay the penance. A child who is not yet adult does not have to pay penance; but rather the penance is paid by his guardian. He who kills game (during his *ihram*) intentionally and insists on that shall be punished in the afterlife even after paying

the penance in this life. One who shows repentance after paying the penance shall not be punished in the afterlife."

Al-Mamun praised Imam Jawad (as) and asked him to question Yahya bin Aktham. Imam al-Jawad (as) turned to Yahya and said to him, 'May I ask you?'

Yahya said politely, 'It is up to you, may I die for you! I may know the answer to your question; otherwise, I shall benefit from you.' Imam (as) then asked: "Can you describe the situation in which a man looked at a woman at dawn while it is forbidden (*haram*) for him to do so; but then at sunrise, it was permissible (*halal*) for him to look at her? Then at noon, it became *haram* for him to look at that woman; but in the afternoon, it became permissible for him to look at her? Then at sunset, it became *haram* for him to look at that woman; but at night, it became *halal* for him to look at her? Then at midnight, it became *haram* for him to look at her; but at dawn, it became *halal* for him to do so?"

Yahya bin Aktham said, "By Allah! I do not know the answer to this question. We would, however, benefit from your answer."

The Imam explained the answer as follows: "At dawn, the woman was the slave of someone else; however, by sunrise, the man had already bought her for himself and so it became *halal* for him to look at her.

"At noon, he set her free, and so she became *haram* for him; but by afternoon, he had married her, so she became *halal* for him.

"At sunset, he did *zihar* by which one's wife becomes *haram* for a person; but by night he paid the penalty for *zihar*, and so she became *halal* for him again.

"At midnight, he divorced her; but by next morning, he revoked his divorce, and so she became *halal* for him."

Then al-Mamun turned to his relatives, who had opposed his decision of marrying his daughter to Imam al-Jawad (as), and said to them, 'Can any one of you answer this question in this way?'

They answered, 'No, by Allah, we cannot - even the judge. O, Amir al-Muminin, you are more aware of him than we are.'

Al-Mamun said to them, 'Did you not know that the people of this House (Ahl al-bayt) are creatures unlike other creatures? Did you not know that the messenger of Allah (sawas) paid homage to al-Hasan and al-Husayn while they were still children and he had not paid homage to any child other than them? Did you not know that their father, Ali (as), believed in the messenger of Allah when he was just nine years old and Allah and His messenger accepted his faith and no faith of a child other than him had been accepted, and the messenger of Allah had not prayed to Allah for a child other than him? Did you not know that they are a progeny, one from the other, and that that which the last of them has (of knowledge and virtues) is as that which the first of them has had?'

They said: You are right, O commander of the faithful!

Then they stood up and left the gathering.

On the second day, after the bond of marriage had been concluded, people came to the palace of al-Mamun. At the head were the leaders of the army, officials of the government and the other classes of people. They came to offer congratulations to Imam al-Jawad (as) and al-Mamun on this happy occasion. Al-Mamun ordered the donations and gifts to be brought. Three silver trays full of small balls of musk and saffron were brought. Inside the balls were pieces of paper in which prizes of precious donations were written. Al-Mamun ordered these balls to be scattered on his train and other gifts to be scattered on the leaders and the other attendants. People left taking with them precious prizes and gifts. And then, al-Mamun gave charity to all the poor people. During his whole life, he magnified Abu Ja'far (as), respected him and preferred him over his sons and other relatives.¹

The Nature of al-Mamun and Imam Jawad's (as) Relationship

We have just mentioned the event of Imam Jawad's (as) marriage with al-Mamun's daughter, the conditions of this relationship and the discussions and criticisms which took place in this regard. Now we

1. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:74-79; Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:281-288; al-Tabarsi, I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda pp. 101-105.

will discuss the points which clarify the cracks in the relation between Imam Jawad (as) and al-Mamun:

Al-Mamun knew very well that Imam Jawad (as) was the real heir of Imamah and religious leadership of the nation of his forefather the Prophet of Allah (sawas). That is why al-Mamun made a very serious plan regarding how to deal with him while preparing his political programs; he knew that Imam Jawad (as) was playing a very important role in Islamic politics. Al-Mamun knew that Imam (as) was not only accepted by the prominent persons of the Islamic nation as a leader but he was also accepted and highly respected among the common people. Abbasids criticized the marriage of al-Mamun's daughter with Imam Jawad (as). They went to al-Mamun and said to him: "O Amir al-Muminin, are you marrying your dearest daughter to a young child [of nine years] who has not yet understood the religion of Allah; who does not distinguish between *halal* and *haram* and compulsory [*wajib*] and recommended [*mustahab*]? It will be better if you wait for him to gain knowledge, learn the Qur'an and distinguish between *halal* and *haram*!

This was when al-Mamun let them know about what he had come to know about Imam Jawad (as), his value among the people and great virtues. He said to them: "Certainly he is more learned than you and knows more about Allah, His Prophet (sawas), and Sunnah and Islamic rules. He recites [and knows] the Book of Allah better than you; and he is more learned about clearly defined and allegorical verses, about abrogating and abrogated verses, about appearance and the inner being, about special and common and about revelation and interpretation of the verses than you."¹

Al-Mamun's reaction reveals that he had studied Imam Jawad's (as) every movement very carefully. Then the commanders, the curtain holders, the gentlemen and the people who were very near to the caliph would come to know about how much al-Mamun cared for Imam Jawad (as).

1. Ali bin Ibrahim, Tafsir al-Qummi 1:182; Hawizi, Tafsir Nur al-Thaqalayn 1:673

As we read previously, al-Mamun was just pretending to have great respect for Imam Jawad (as). Actually, in ostensibly supporting him, he had two main targets:

Firstly: To attract the attention of the majority of Muslims, partisans and companions of the Household (as). For this, it was necessary for him to pretend to be among those having respect for the Household (as) if he wanted to achieve his goals;

Secondly: By showing feelings of respect and honour towards Imam Jawad (as) he wanted to erase the memories of how he martyred Imam al-Rida (as) from the minds and hearts of the people. Let us not forget that he was successful enough to betray the people by doing this.

Al-Mamun's relation with Imam Jawad (as) was like his relation with Imam al-Rida (as) which was full of political interest. Apparently, he showed exemplary behaviour towards Imam (as), but he had bad intentions for him in his heart. He made plans and conspired against Imam Jawad (as); but he could never act upon his plans and was not able to degrade Imam (as) in the eyes of the people. That is why, as a last option, he married his daughter to so that he would show that Imam Jawad (as) had hunger for power.

Muhammad ibn al-Raian narrates, "al-Ma'mun did all he could to prove that abu Ja'far, Muhammad ibn Ali al-Rida (as) was only a young man of worldly desires. However al-Ma'mun was not able to succeed. When he became frustrated, he gave his daughter in marriage to Abu Ja'far, Muhammad ibn Ali al-Rida (as). For the ceremony he sent two most beautiful entertaining girls each with a bowl in her hand with a precious pearl in it to welcome Abu Ja'far, Muhammad ibn Ali al-Rida (as) when he would sit on the special seat prepared for him. They, however, were not a distraction to the Imam (as). There was a man called Mukhariq who had a voice, musical skills, a stringed instrument and a long beard. Al-Ma'mun called him and he said, "O Amir al-Mu'minin, if he is a worldly man, I will prove myself by dealing him deadly blows on your behalf." He sat before abu Ja'far, Muhammad ibn Ali al-Rida (as) and began to bray a hee-haw that made all the people of the house gather around him. He began to play his instrument and sing. He did this for an hour but Abu Ja'far (as) did not pay any attention. Then he (as) raised his head

and said, "O you, tall bearded one, be pious before Allah." The narrator says that the musical instrument fell from his hands and from that time he lost the use of his hands for the rest of his life. When Al-Ma'mun asked him about his condition he said, "When Abu Ja'far (as) expressed his disappointment in me it struck me with a huge degree of fear from which I have not been able to relieve myself ever since."¹

This story clearly shows al-Mamun's intentions and conspiracies against Imam Jawad (as). He benefited from every single chance to degrade Imam Jawad (as) in the eyes of the people and show him to be a weak person having no ability for the Imamah and leadership of the Islamic Ummah and – God forbid – introduced him as unfit, and showed his preference over the Imam (as) for the post of Imamah and caliphate. However, he was never successful in his attempts. Then he thought of another plan for keeping Imam (as) under observation which was to marry his daughter to Imam (as). Obviously, al-Mamun did not do so, from his heart, for he had no respect towards Imam (as) but just wanted Imam (as) to be under his observation. However, we will discuss this in detail in consequent chapters.

Another trick which al-Mamun used in order to degrade Imam (as) was to compel his chief justice, Yahya bin Aktham, to prepare tough jurisprudential questions and pose them to Imam Jawad (as) so that, by this means, al-Mamun could decrease his level of honour and respect and thereby achieve his own goals. Al-Mamun said to Yahya bin Aktham: "Is it lawful for a man to marry a woman after he has committed fornication with her? The Imam (as) answered:

He should leave her for a while until she is cleansed from his and others' unlawful sperm. Just as she has committed fornication with that man, she may have committed fornication with others. After that, he can marry her. Such a woman is like a date palm from which a man has unlawfully plucked fruit rather than buying fruit lawfully.²

Hence, Yahya could say nothing."

1. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:494-495.

2. Tuhaf al-'Uqul p. 454.

So on such occasions, al-Mamun failed to achieve his targets. However, he very cunningly pretended with great political experience to be happy so that he could show that whatever was asked was a personal and individual attempt by Yahya bin Aktham.

Such tricks are very useful for betraying the common and simple people who do not have the ability to ponder the problems. However, the real friends and companions of the Imam (as) who were enjoying his great knowledge were never trapped in such snares. According to al-Kulayni, some political parties of that era were not deceived by al-Mamun's deceitful attempts. They knew it was only a political machination for al-Mamun to marry his daughter to Imam Jawad (as).

Muhammad bin Ali al-Hashimi said, "I went to Abu Ja'far in the morning following his marriage to the daughter of al-Mamun. The previous night I had taken a drug and therefore I was thirsty. I did not like to ask for water. Abu Ja'far looked at my face and said, 'I see you are thirsty.' I said, 'Yes, I am.' He said to one of the servants, 'O boy, bring us some water.' I said to myself, 'Now they will bring poisoned water.' I felt distressed. The servant came with water. Abu Ja'far smiled at me and asked the servant to give him the water. He took the water and drank from it and then gave it to me and I drank."¹

Muhammad bin Ali was among those few people aware of al-Mamun's enmity towards Imam Jawad (as). Therefore, every moment he was expecting something unpleasant for Imam (as). He feared that al-Mamun would martyr Imam (as) at the first opportunity. That was the reason that he was sorry for asking for water.

Al-Mamun's Motive behind his Marrying his Daughter to Imam Jawad (as)

There were two motives behind al-Mamun's relationship with Imam Jawad (as):

1. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:495-496; Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:291-292; al-Nayshaburi, Rawdat al-Wa'izin p. 243; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:54/hadith 28.

Firstly, it could be a good propaganda tool for al-Mamun by which he could make the people believe that he had a great respect for the Household of the Prophet (as). The second motive, which is more important, was to appoint a full-time spy who would report Imam's (as) every move to al-Mamun. This was something performed by al-Mamun's daughter, Umm al-Fadhl, in the most perfect manner.

The Positioning of Abbasids

The positioning of the Abbasids against al-Mamun's action was based on their hatred, prejudice and unawareness; because of al-Mamun's apparent good conduct towards Imam Jawad (as), they were very angry with him. They did not understand the reality and depth of this relationship, neither did they know anything about al-Mamun's targets which he was about to achieve through his relationship with Imam Jawad (as). On the other hand, al-Mamun also benefited from the Abbasids' lack of awareness in this regard and, by rejecting and refusing their ideas, pretended that he was really a friend and well-wisher of the Household (as).

Imam Jawad's (as) Positioning against Ibn Aktham

As we mentioned before, Imam Jawad (as) entered a jurisprudential discussion with Yahya bin Aktham so that Yahya's scientific weaknesses would be manifest to the people. Through these debates, Imam Jawad (as) was seeking targets which were as follows:

Firstly: Imam Jawad (as) was living in a society where an opponent group was always trying to put forward propaganda against him, saying that Imam Jawad (as) was ignorant about religion and was merely a young child. Therefore, by entering the debating sessions with the greatest scientific people of his era, Imam Jawad (as) let the people become about his Imamah and great knowledge.

Secondly: Since Yahya bin Aktham was chief justice and the leading jurist of al-Mamun's government, defeating him meant defeating the whole system. This is why Imam Jawad (as) debated with him about scientific matters and, despite his young age, showed his supremacy over Yahya.

Thirdly: By taking part in such debating sessions, Imam (as) spread awareness among the people and let them gain the correct wisdom and knowledge.

Imam Jawad (as) in the Reign of al-Mamun

After Imam al-Rida's (as) martyrdom in 203 A.H. during the time of al-Mamun's rule, the post and responsibility of the nation's leadership was given to Imam Jawad (as). Al-Mamun died in 218 A.H.¹ in "Badandun" in Rome. His body was then taken to Tus for burial.²

Therefore, Imam Jawad (as) was a contemporary of al-Mamun during the first fifteen years of his life. In fact, he spent most of his life as Imam (as) in the ruling period of al-Mamun.

2. Al-Mu'tasim Abbasi

According to al-Thahabi, Abu Ishaq, Muhammad bin Harun al-Rashid, known as al-Mu'tasim, was born in 180 A.H. However, according to Sauli, al-Mu'tasim was born in the month of Sha'ban in 178 A.H. His mother was Umm Walad [a slave girl] whose real name was Marida. She was very dear to Harun.

Al-Mu'tasim was very brave and courageous, but he was illiterate. He was called 'Mu'tasim' [holding fast the string of Allah] while he was far away from this. He was morally corrupt. He had a slave named 'Ujayb' to whom he was emotionally attached.³

He continued the way of his brother regarding the creation of the Qur'an and passed his life in testing the scholars about this issue. He had letters written to every part of the country and ordered the teachers and coaches to teach this issue to the children and students. The people suffered in this regard. He killed many scholars who did not listen to him about the issue in question. One of the scholars punished was Ahmad bin Hanbal, who was tortured because he had disagreed with the issue of the creation of the Qur'an. It has been said

1. Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:247-274.

2. Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh 5:226-227; Tarikh al- Khulafa p. 313.

3. Tarikh al- Khulafa p. 333-334.

that he [Ahmad] was beaten so badly that he became unconscious and the skin of his body was removed. He was then made captive and imprisoned.¹

Mu'tasim was a dogmatist and very cruel in his behaviour towards his political and other opponents. He had little experience in governing the country. His government experienced great chaos and there was discord throughout the country.²

Al-Mu'tasim, whose mother was a Turk, assembled a Turkish army and gave them a large amount of money. The Turks took the charge of government into their own hands. By this action, al-Mu'tasim raised the feeling of resentment among the Arabs and developed the issue of tribalism in Islamic society. These politics were the greatest challenge the Abbasid government had ever experienced. After al-Mu'tasim came to power, the situation became worse and the danger from the Turkish army increased daily. Every caliph who tried to limit his authority faced military revolt.

Al-Mu'tasim and Alert Forerunners

The acute intellectual contradiction, caused by different spiritual loyalties and understanding between, on the one hand the Imams (as) with their faithful Shia believers and, on the other hand, the Abbasid government and their followers, became the cause for the continuation of enmity between the dual guidelines of the Household (as) and the Abbasids. This enmity kept changing its face and appeared in a new shape in every era; sometimes it became strong and on other occasions it appeared to weaken depending on the circumstances. Al-Mu'tasim also continued vengeful politics against the members of the Household (as) as had his father and forefathers

1. Ibid p. 335.

2. Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh pp. 232-265. The revolt of "Taliqan" under commandership of Qasim bin Muhammad Alavi; the revolt of "Zats" in Basra; the revolt of Babak Khurramdin; attack of the Romans from Zabbara and other Islamic lands and the revolt of "Mubarra" in Palestine were among some famous revolts in the time of time of al-Mu'tasim. Sir A'alam al-Nubala 10: 292-303

before him. He set up a battlefield against Islam and its rightful path. However, he had to face direct opposition from the Household (as) and their Shia believers. The revolts led by the Alawites will be studied in subsequent chapters.

Imam Jawad (as) and al-Mu'tasim

Imam Jawad (as) lived only two years of his life under the reign of al-Mu'tasim. Finally, he was, also, martyred by the same distorted governing system. It seems necessary here to study the relationship between Imam Jawad (as) and al-Mu'tasim:

1. Calling Imam Jawad (as) to Baghdad

Imam Jawad's (as) living in Madinah was making al-Mu'tasim concerned because he perceived Imam Jawad (as) as a great danger to himself. That was why he ordered Imam Jawad (as) to come to Baghdad so that he could watch his every move. Imam Jawad (as) left for Baghdad when he heard of al-Mu'tasim's order. He arrived in the capital of al-Mu'tasim's government only two days before the end of the month of Muharram in 220 A.H; and passed from the world in the month of Dhil-Qa'dah in the same year.¹

2. Planning for Imam's (as) assassination

The useful leadership of Imam Jawad (as) had turned him into a great danger for al-Mu'tasim's government because the governmental system was considering the possibility of a link between all the movements of the Islamic Ummah and Imam Jawad (as). Therefore, they wished to be rid of the Imam (as).

Zarqan, a close friend of Abu Dawud, said, 'One day, he (Abu Dawud) returned from al-Mu'tasim in distress. I asked him what the matter was and he said, 'A thief confessed that he had committed a theft and the caliph wanted to purify him by punishing him. He gathered the jurisprudents together and sent for Muhammad bin Ali (al-Jawad). He asked us how the thief's hand would be cut. I said, 'His hand should be cut from the wrist because Allah has said when talking on Tayammum:

1. Tarikh al- Khulafa pp. 335-336; al-Mas'udi, Muruj al-Dhahab 4:57-58.

﴿فَاَمْسَحُوا بِوُجُوْهِكُمْ وَاَيْدِيكُمْ﴾

"...And wipe your faces and your hands."¹

Some jurisprudents agreed with me on that and others said, 'The hand must be cut from the elbow.' Al-Mu'tasim asked what their evidence was and they said, 'Allah has said:

﴿وَاَيْدِيكُمْ اِلَى الْمَرَافِقِ﴾

"...Wash your faces and your hands as far as the elbows..."²

Then, al-Mu'tasim turned to Muhammad bin Ali and asked him, 'O Abu Ja'far, what do you say on that?

He said, 'O Amir al-Mu'minin, the jurisprudents have talked about that.'

Al-Mu'tasim said, 'Leave what they have said aside. What do you have to say?'

Imam al-Jawad (a.s) said, 'O Amir al-Mu'minin, would you exempt me from that?'

Al-Mu'tasim said, 'I adjure you by Allah that you tell what you have.'

Imam al-Jawad (a.s) said, 'Now, since you have put me on oath, I will say. They (the jurisprudents) are mistaken. Only the fingers should be cut from the joints of their origins and the palm should be left safe.'

Al-Mu'tasim asked about the evidence and Imam al-Jawad (a.s) said, 'The messenger of Allah (sawas) said, 'Prostration is on seven organs; the face, the two hands, the two knees and the two feet.' Then, if his hand is cut from the wrist or the elbow, he shall not have a hand to prostrate on it and Allah has said, "*The places of worship (prostration) are for Allah*" meaning these seven places that one prostrates on:

1. Surat al-Maidah, 5:6.

2. Surat al-Maidah, 5:6.

﴿وَأَنَّ الْمَسْجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا﴾

*"So pray not unto anyone along with Allah."*¹

What is for Allah is not cut.' Al-Mu'tasim approved this answer and ordered the hand of the thief to be cut from the joints of fingers without the palm.

Zarqan added that Abu Dawud said, "After three days, I went to al-Mu'tasim and said to him, 'Being loyal to Amir al-Mu'minin is obligatory on me. I will tell you about something that I know for which I may go to Hell (if I do not tell it).' Al-Mu'tasim said, 'What is it?' I said, Amir al-Mu'minin had gathered in his meeting the jurisprudents and ulama of his subjects for a serious matter of religion. He asked them about the verdict on it and they told him of the verdict they had. Your family, leaders, viziers and scribes had attended the meeting and the people outside had also heard of it. Then all the sayings of these jurisprudents and ulama were brushed aside just for one man's word; a group of the nation believe in his Imamah and claim that he is worthier of your position than you, and then his suggestion is followed and preferred to the verdicts of the jurisprudents.' Al-Mu'tasim changed colour and noticed what I drew his attention to. He said, 'May Allah reward you with good for your advice.'"

When the fourth day came, he ordered one of his ministers to invite Imam Jawad (as) to his home. However, Imam Jawad (as) did not accept his invitation and said: "You know that I do not come to your gatherings."

The minister said: "I am inviting you only for food. I wish you had come to our house and walked on our carpet so that with your feet in our house both our house and my body would become blessed. Then a certain minister [whose name he mentioned] would like to see you."

Imam (as) accepted the invitation of the minister; went to his house and sat at the tablecloth. He had just eaten some food when he

1. *Surat Al-Jinn*, 72:18.

realised the food was poisonous. At that time, Imam (as) asked for his horse so as to leave the place. The owner of the house insisted he did not leave. Imam (as) said to him: "It is better for you if I leave the place now. Then he passed the day and night in illness and at last passed from the world.¹

Imam Jawad (as) knew very well that he would be martyred after this invitation. Ismail bin Mihran says: When Imam Jawad (as) was taken to Baghdad from Madinah for the first time, I said to him: "I am afraid for you during this journey. If something happens to you, who will be the next Imam (as)?

Ismail bin Mihran says: "Imam looked at me with a smile on his face and said: "What you have thought about is not going to happen this year." But when Imam was (as) taken to Baghdad for the second time by Mu'tasim, I met him and asked: "May I be ransom! Now that you are going, please tell us who will be the next Imam? I observed that Imam Jawad (as) started weeping. He wept so much that his beard and moustache became wet. Then he looked at me and said: "This time you should be afraid for me. Therefore, you should know that after me the Imamah will belong to my son Ali."²

Imam Jawad's (as) presence was a great danger to the Abbasid caliph. al-Mu'tasim, who thought him to be the greatest danger to his government, was looking to remove him with the least loss. After much thought he chose Umm Fadhl, the daughter of al-Mamun and wife of Imam Jawad (as), as the best option for fulfilling his evil plan. According to al-Mu'tasim, Umm Fadhl was the one who could easily kill Imam Jawad (as) without fear of the people's revolt or complaining. Al-Mu'tasim was seeing in Umm Fadhl two things which could turn out to be very useful motives for Umm Fadhl to kill Imam Jawad (as):

Firstly: Umm Fadhl had a strong relation with the Abbasid dynasty; because, on one hand, she was the daughter of al-Mamun and, on the

1. Tafsir al-Ayyashi 1:319-320; Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:5-7

2. Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:298; al-Nayshaburi, Rawdat al-Wa'izin p. 241

other hand, the present caliph al-Mu'tasim was his uncle. Also, she was not so strong in her religious beliefs as to be able to neglect any kind of relationship for the truth. Therefore, she would easily accept al-Mu'tasim's offer and would make it practicable about Imam Jawad (as).

Secondly: she was very jealous of Imam Jawad (as); because she did not have any children. On the other hand, Imam Jawad (as) had other wives, one of whom had given birth to Imam Hadi (as). Also her jealousy was not unknown to the people. The historians have said in this regard: It is said that Umm Fadhl wrote a letter to her father, in which she complained about her husband Imam Jawad (as). She said: "He has other wives while I am his wife and this is what making me jealous of him."

Al-Mamun wrote back to his daughter: "I did not marry you to him to make lawful things unlawful for him. Do not write such things to me any more."

Certainly in this age, Imam Jawad (as) was a target of degrading and governmental encroachments an example of which is given in the following:

Amr bin Faraj Rakhji was a vengeful person towards the Household (as) of the Prophet (sawas). He had a post in the Abbasid government. Historians have quoted him from Muhammad bin Sinan as saying: Once I went to see abu al-Hasan (as). He said, "O Muhammad, has something happened to the family of al-Faraj (the governor of al-Madina)?" I said, "Yes, 'Umar (a member of al-Faraj family) has died." The Imam (as) said, "All thanks and praise belongs to Allah." He said it twenty-four times. I then said, "My Master if I had known it would make you this happy I would have come running barefoot with the news (to congratulate you)." The Imam (as) said, "Do you not know what he – may Allah condemn him - once said to Muhammad ibn Ali, my father?" The narrator said that I said, "No, I do not know it." The Imam (as) said, "He spoke to my father about an issue and then said to him, "I think you are drunk." My father then said, "O Lord you know that I have been fasting this day, so make

him taste a war, and the humiliation of captivity". By Allah, in just a few days his belongings were looted and he was captured and dead - may Allah deprive him of His mercy.¹

Imam Jawad's (as) Martyrdom

We have already talked about al-Mu'tasim's motives in martyring Imam Jawad (as) and Umm al-Fadhl's part in this great crime. In addition to the above reasons which were put into effect by al-Mu'tasim, another thing which made Umm al-Fadhl kill her husband, Imam Jawad (as), was the motivation of her father al-Mamun.

Abu Nasrani writes: Hakima, the daughter of Muhammad bin Ali bin Musa bin Ja'far (as) [the paternal aunt of Imam Hassan Askari (as)] said to me: "when Muhammad bin Ali al-Rida (as) passed from the world, I went to Umm Isa, the daughter of al-Mamun to express my condolences. She was very sad and was anxious about Imam Jawad (as). She was crying so much that I feared she would not live any longer and would die. Then we talked about his generosity, good morals, honour, sincerity and respect which Allah had given him. Suddenly Umm Isa said: Should I say something more wonderful, great and unspeakable?

I said: What is that?

She said: I always kept an eye on him and kept him under my observation. Sometimes, he said something for which I complained to my father, but he said to me: "O my daughter! Be good to him for he is a part of the Prophet's (sawas) body."

One day a woman came to me. I asked: "Who are you?"

She said: "I am one of the offspring of Ammar bin Yasir and I am the wife of your husband, Muhammad bin Ali al-Rida (as)."

I was so jealous of her that it was unbearable. I was about to leave the house and I wanted to degrade her because I was being misled by Satan. However, I controlled my feelings and did not show any kind

1. Ibn Shahr'ashub, al-Manaqib 4:397; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:62-63/hadith 41.

of anger towards her. I respected her and gave her some clothes. When she was gone, I went to my father and mentioned everything to him. My father, who was drunk, shouted: O slave! Bring me the sword." The sword was brought. My father sat on the back of his horse and said: "By God, I will kill him."

I saw what was going on. I said: "We belong to Him and to Him is our return." In what great danger have I placed myself and my husband? Then I started beating my cheeks. My father went to him [Imam Jawad (as)] and cut him to pieces. I also ran behind him in great fear. When the day came, I went to my father and said to him: "do you know what you did yesterday?"

He said: "What did I do?"

I said: "You killed the son of al-Rida (as)."

My father's eyes sparked and he fell unconscious. When he came to his senses, he said to me: "Woe unto you, what are you saying?"

I said: "O my father, by God the truth is what I told you. You went to him and killed him with repeated attacks of your sword."

On hearing this, my father was very anxious. He ordered to call Yasir, the servant.

Yasir came. My father said to him: "Woe unto you for what my daughter is saying."

Yasir said: "O commander of the faithful, she is telling the truth."

When al-Mamun heard this, he started beating his face and chest saying: "We belong to Him and to Him is our return." By God, now we have to face everlasting destruction, stigma and dishonour. Woe unto you, O Yasir! Just go and inquire about him. Then come and inform me because I am about to die."

Yasir went out to do as he commanded. I was still beating my face. It was only after a while when Yasir came back and said to al-Mamun: "O commander of the faithful! I have good news for you!"

My father said: "What is the good news?"

Yasir said: "I went to see him. I found him wearing a cloth and a coverlet and he was brushing his teeth. I said my greetings to him and

said: "O son of the Prophet (sawas)! I want you to give me your coverlet so that I offer my prayer on it and make my body blessed with it." I asked him for it so that I would see whether or not there were signs of a sword on his body. He gave the coverlet to me and I saw his body was white and bright and just a little pale [and was completely fine]."

My father al-Mamun wept for a while. Then he said: "After this [miracle] there remains nothing [to reject]; and this affair is a lesson for me for the first and the last time. Then he said to Yasir: O Yasir, what I remember is that I asked for a sword to be brought and I sat on the back of my horse and went to him. Also I remember when I left him. However, I do not remember anything about what happened in between and about how I came back to my court. May Allah curse this girl ever after!

O Yasir, just go to her and say to her on my behalf: from now on if you come to me and complain about him [Imam Jawad (as)] or if you go out without his permission, I will take out his revenge on you. Then go to Ibn al-Rida (as). Take twenty thousand dinars from the treasure house along with the horse which I rode yesterday and give them to him. Then he commanded the Hashimites to meet Imam (as) and pay their respects to him.

Yasir said: "I informed the Hashimites about al-Mamun's command and accompanied them to Imam (as) and we paid our respects to him. Then I mentioned al-Mamun's greetings to him and put the dinars in front of him and I showed him the horse of al-Mamun. He looked at the horse for a while and then smiled. He said: "O Yasir! Has he attacked me in this way before? Does he not know that I have a defender who has protected me from his harm; and who will always be between me and him?"

I said: "O my Master! O son of the Prophet (sawas)! Let it go and forgive him. I swear upon Allah and I swear upon your grandfather the Prophet of Allah (sawas) that he did not know what he was doing and where he was on this earth [because of being drunk]. He has sincerely sworn and has distributed charity not to be drunk anymore because he has understood that wine is a snare of Satan. O son of the Prophet (sawas), when you go to him, do not mention anything about what has happened and do not reproach him for it.

The Imam (as) said: "By God I was going to do the same."

Then he asked for his clothes, put them on and stood up. The people who were there also stood with him. Then he went to al-Mamun. When al-Mamun saw him, he stood and embraced him and welcomed him. Then al-Mamun did not allow anyone else to visit him and start talking with Imam Jawad (as) in secret. He asked Imam (as) to ask for anything and it would be provided. When their discussion was about to finish, Abu Ja'far Muhammad bin Ali al-Rida (as) said: "O commander of the faithful!

Al-Mamun said: "I am at your service, just order whatever you want."

Imam (as) said: "I want to give you advice and I want you to accept it."

Al-Mamun said: "O son of the Prophet (sawas)! You may to be praised. What is that advice?"

Abu Ja'far (as) said: "I want you not to come out of your home at night because I do not find you to be secure from these mean people's harm. And I have a prayer for you with which you will remain safe from all calamities, evils, pests, diseases and hardships; and even if you are among the Roman and Turkish forces and if they do their best, even then they will not be able to defeat you with the help of God; as Allah protected me from you the last day. If you like I will send it for you so that you will remain safe and sound from what I just said."

Al-Mamun said: "Yes. Write it in your own handwriting and then send for me." Abu Ja'far also accepted it.

Yasir says: "The next morning, Abu Ja'far called for me and when I arrived in his presence, he asked for a piece of deer's skin and wrote the prayer on it. Then he said: "O Yasir, take it for Amir al-mu'minin and say to him [on my behalf]: "Take a silver cylinder and write on it what I am going to say. Then whenever you want to tie it on your arm, take Wudhu first and offer four rak'ats prayers. During each Rak'at recite *Surat Hamd* once, *Ayat al-Kursi*¹ seven times, the verse

1. *Surat Al-Baqarah*, 2:225.

"*shahd allah...*"¹ seven times, *Surat Shams* seven times², *Surat Lail*³ seven times and *Surat Tawhid*⁴ seven times. Then tie it on your right arm against hardships; and Inshallah it will protect you from whatever you fear. If you go to fight against the Romans, God willing it will bring you a triumph against them, too. [Do not forget] to bind it on your arm when the moon rises in "Qamar dar Aqrab".

It is said: when al-Mamun heard about the qualities of this amulet, he attacked Rome and with the help of God was victorious against the Romans. A large amount of war booty was gained through this war. He kept it with him in all his battles and wars and continued to enjoy the blessings of Allah. With Allah's blessing, he was victorious on every battlefield."⁵

According to historians, by killing Imam (as), Umm Fadhl committed her greatest crime. History says: "al-Mu'tasim was looking for a plan to kill Abu Ja'far (as). Since he knew that Umm Fadhl disliked him and was very angry with him [because she knew about his other wives], he found her appropriate for this crime. Umm Fadhl also accepted his offer. She poisoned some grapes and placed them before Abu Ja'far. Abu Ja'far also ate some of them. At that time, Umm Fadhl felt sorry for what she had done. Therefore, she started weeping and crying. Abu Ja'far asked her: "Why are you crying? By God you will be the victim of irreparable poverty and diseases which you will not be able to hide."

As was cursed by Abu Ja'far, disease attacked Umm Fadhl's lower body and she spent everything she had on curing her disease and became very poor. She was so poor that her relatives gave some

1. *Surat Al-Imran*, 3:18.

2. *Surat Al-Shams*, 91:1.

3. *Surat Al-Lail*, 92:1.

4. *Surat Al-Tawhid*, 112:1.

5. 'Uyun al-Mujizat pp. 113-117; Amn al-Akhtar pp. 74-77; Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:95-98.

money feeling sorry for her poverty. At last she died of the same disease."¹

After eating the grapes provided by Umm Fadhl, Imam Jawad (as) was poisoned and passed from the world as a martyr. Till the very end of his life, he did not forget Allah the Almighty even for a moment and kept mentioning His name. With his death, another shining star from the Household (as) went dark. Although it appeared to be the jealousy of a woman which was the cause of Imam Jawad's (as) death in fact it was the battle of right and wrong which made this crime become written in the pages of history. The idolatrous al-Mu'tasim could not tolerate the righteousness and truthfulness of Imam Jawad (as); therefore, he killed him. By martyring Imam Jawad (as), he removed another person from the Household of the Prophet (sawas) who was making thoughts shine and who was enlightening the whole world with the light of knowledge and virtue.

Funerals and Burial

The holy corpse of Imam al-Jawad (as) was prepared, washed and enshrouded. Al-Wathiq (later Abbasid caliph) and al-Mu'tasim offered the prayer (for the dead) on the holy corpse.² The corpse of this great imam was carried to the graveyard of Quraysh escorted by great crowds of people. It was a memorable day and Baghdad had not witnessed a day like it before. Tens of thousands had gathered in a sad procession mentioning the virtues of this great imam and mourning him and thinking of the great loss Muslims had had to suffer.

A grave was dug beside that of his grandfather Imam Musa bin Ja'far al-Kadhim (as) (in Baghdad) and he was buried in it and human values and high ideals were buried with him.³

1. 'Uyun al-Mujizat pp 118; Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:17.

2. Tarikh Baghdad 3:54; Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil fi al-Tarikh 5:37; Wafiat al-A'ayan 4:175; In Mir'at al-Jinan 2:81, it is mentioned that al-Wathiq the son of al-Mu'tasim had offered the prayer on the holy corpse of Imam al-Jawad (as).

3. The life of Imam Jawad (as) p. 263.

Abu Ja'far Mashhadi narrated from Muhammad bin Raziihah who narrated it from the teacher of Imam Abu al-Hasan Hadi (as): "One day he [Imam Hadi (as)] had the tablet [a table or something made of leather] in his hand and was reading it. Suddenly, he threw it away and stood in great fear saying: "We belong to Him and to Him is our return." By God, my father has just passed from the world.

I said to him: How did you know that he has passed from the world?

He said: With Allah's blessing, nothing is hidden to us."

I said: "Then [it is for sure that] he has passed from the world."

He said: "Leave these discussions and let me go into the room. I will return. And then ask me anything about the Qur'an and I will answer you.

Then he went into the room. I was very anxious about him. Therefore, I also followed him.

It was said that Abu al-Hasan went into the room and closed the door. He said to me: Do not let anyone in until I come back to you.

After a while, Imam came out of the room with a different situation. He kept saying: "We belong to Him and to Him is our return."

I said to him: "May I be ransom, has your father died?"

Imam said: "Yes he has. I washed him and enshrouded him; and no one else has to do it except me."

Then he said: "Leave these matters and ask me about the verses of the holy Qur'an. I will also interpret them if you want me to.

I said: "Recite *Surat A'raf*. He recited it after "Isti'aza"

﴿وَإِذْ نَتَقْنَا الْجَبَلَ فَوْقَهُمْ كَأَنَّهُ ظُلَّةٌ وَظَنُّوا أَنَّهُ وَاقِعٌ بِهِمْ﴾¹

Saying: In the name of Allah; the Beneficent, the Merciful. When we plucked the mountain (and held it as if it were a canopy) and they thought it was about to fall on them. Hold on with power to what we

1. *Surat Al-A'raf*, 7:171.

have given you and remember that which is in it, so that you may be fearful of God.¹

The Date of Death of Imam (as)

It is believed that Imam Jawad (as) lived for twenty years.² He was the youngest person among all Imams (as). He passed his whole life trying to bring honour and respect for Islam and the Muslims; also in calling the people towards oneness of God, faith and belief in Him and piety. He died with and for the same purpose. He met the High Comrade on Tuesday the fifth of Dhil-Qa'dah in 220 A.H. There are other traditions and narrations, too, which mention his death in the last days of the month of Dhil-Qa'dah, the sixth of Dhil-Hajjah and five days before the end of Dhil-Hajjah respectively.³

May peace be upon him on the day he was born, and on the day he took the responsibility of Imamah during his childhood and on the day when he was martyred; also on the day when he will be made alive once again in the court of his Lord.

1. Al-Tusi, al-Thaqib fi'l-Manaqib.

2. Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:273; Ibn al-Athir, al-Kamil fi'l-Tarikh 5:237.

3. Yafi'ai Mriat al-Jinan 2:81; Tarikh Baghdad 3:55; Ibn al-Sabbagh al-Maliki, al-Fusul al-Muhimmah p. 263.

CHAPTER THREE

THE NECESSITIES OF IMAM JAWAD'S (AS) ERA

In the last two chapters, we read about the qualities of Imam Jawad's (as) era, the way in which the rulers behaved with him, his divine mission and the righteous group of his followers: those people who remained with Imam Jawad (as) for carrying the divine mission. They never left him and their own beliefs which they had developed in Imam Jawad (as), his father (as) and forefathers (as).

In this chapter, we will come to know about the divine responsibilities which were in the form of the Islamic religion and its rules and regulations; and which were put on the shoulders of the Household (as) especially Imam Jawad (as) as a responsibility. Also we will come to know about the necessities of his age which had their own conditions along with cultural, political and social innovations.

The Prophet (sawas) had himself trained this family so that after him they would save the divine mission from tricks and conspiracies of the kings and the preachers of the royal court and save the Islamic Ummah from any kind of decline and deviations. The Islamic nation deserved to be kept safe because they had changed into a living nation fully committed to practising the Islamic and divine culture and spreading it all over the world. Certainly this nation had to face some hardships and great injuries in the form of deviation in the field of leadership which also appeared in other fields of life.

At that time, on the one hand, Imam Jawad (as) had to face the outcomes in the important political and Islamic field which had been realized by his father and forefathers (as); on the other hand, he was facing some new phenomena in the fields of politics, society and religion. Certainly, the last affair was the result of the open atmosphere which was provided by the so-called system of Islamic caliphate for the deviated currents so that they could freely act in the Islamic domain and do whatever they wanted without fear of anyone. The rulers provided these currents with the opportunity to weaken the

divine line of the Household (as) without having to involve themselves directly in the affairs of the Imams (as).

Imam Jawad (as), also considering the conditions of his time, would have to build equilibrium among his divine responsibilities on one hand, and from the provided and available facilities with what was achievable under such conditions and he had to reach his divine goals and targets through this medium; the targets which the religion and Allah the Almighty had told him to achieve, and making him the guardian and divine leader so that he would devote his life to Allah and His everlasting religion (Islam).

With this explanation, the necessities of Imam Jawad's (as) age, the important role which he had to play in the spread of Islam and the targets which he had to achieve for the group of the pious people become clear and manifest. Therefore, we will divide this discussion into two important discourses:

Firstly: the necessity to spread Islam in its common way;

Secondly: the necessities of the pious group.

The necessities of spreading Islam can be summarized as follows:

Proving the suitability of the Household (as), especially of Imam Jawad's (as) line for keeping the divine leadership and the Muslim nation;

Reacting against the efforts of the kings and rulers who were playing strong roles in degrading the Household (as), their followers and the movements of people against the government;

Laying the ground for a real government based on truth – which was being awaited by the people. And this was to be brought into effect despite all efforts by the rulers to remove the matter of Imam Mahdi (may Allah hasten his appearance);

Taking a stand against innovations, deviations and deviated matters which were coming into being in the Islamic domain;

Considering the affairs of the Islamic nation;

The needs and necessities of the group of pious people were also of the kind mentioned in the following lines:

Exactness and certainty of a young person exceeding all natural limits;

Making the cultural, psychological and educational structures firm and strong;

Strengthening the establishment of the pious groups and preparing them for a long period of occultation;

Providing the ground for Imam Hadi's (as) early Imamah under those hard conditions;

Providing the grounds for the occultation of Imam Mahdi (may Allah hasten his appearance) and preparing the people at an intellectual and mental level appropriate to the conditions of that period.

The detail for the necessities and needs of spreading Islam in general will be mentioned in subsequent chapters. Afterwards we will mention the necessities of the group of the pious people.

SECTION FOUR

It Consists Of Three Chapters:

Chapter One

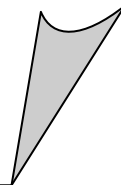
*Imam Muhammad Jawad (as) and the General
Necessities of the Islamic world*

Chapter Two

*Imam Jawad (as) and the Necessities
of the Pious Group*

Chapter Three

*The School of Thought and Educational
Inheritance of Imam Jawad (as)*



CHAPTER ONE
IMAM MUHAMMAD JAWAD (AS) AND THE GENERAL
NECESSITIES OF THE ISLAMIC WORLD

This chapter will be analyzed under different titles and topics:

1. The Household (as) and the Divine Leadership

The scientific life of Imam al-Rida (as) had become obvious and manifest for all the people and even the common people knew him along with his great virtues. Therefore, he had made a place in the hearts of the people and his great thoughts and ideas had attracted everyone's attention to them. This was something unbearable for al-Mamun. That is why al-Mamun decided to degrade him in front of his followers and companions and remove the love and attraction of the followers of the Household (as) which they had in their hearts for him. When he could not be successful, he thought of another plan to remove Imam (as) and get rid of him. He had no choice but to kill him because if he let Imam (as) go back to Madinah, Imam (as) could take over the government from him but from the Abbasids as he had become so famous among the people. On the other hand, Imam's (as) remaining in the centre of the caliphate was equally dangerous for al-Mamun and his government having the same effects on his government; and it could become the reason to strengthen the line of Imamah.

Another topic which could strongly affect the ruling system of the Abbasids in general and the government of al-Mamun in particular was related to the affair of the birth of the promised Imam (as). According to Allah's promise to the nations, the promised Imam (as) had to come to manage what was the truth, change the dispersion into cohesion and overcome cruelties and mutiny.

On the other hand, the holy Prophet (sawas) had introduced the promised Imam (as) with his name and genealogy to the people. He had also mentioned his qualities and signs. He mentioned him as the

ninth from amongst Imam Hussain's (as) offspring. He talked of his worldwide leadership and warned the oppressors about his appearance; he also gave the good news of his appearance to the believers and the oppressed saying that he would develop justice and bring peace to the world. Such predictions could transform the peace and tranquillity of the rulers into anxiety even as told by the common fortune tellers. Certainly, the effect of the news was much stronger than that because it had been predicted by the Prophet (sawas) who was connected to the origin of inspirations and who talked about whatever he was asked to by Allah. On the other hand, how could those people show no reaction to such a great and near threat who used to worry about thousands of plans to counter their lust and hunger for power and government!

The Prophet (sawas) had introduced all his twelve successors who were known as his Household (as) and who were all from the progeny of Imam Ali (as). Now the people were beholding the eighth Imam (as) [i.e. Imam al-Rida (as)] who was the fifth Imam (as) from the progeny of Imam Hussain (as). At such a time, the Abbasids benefited from every single chance for their survival. Therefore, it does not seem to be impossible that the rulers were trying to break up the group of pious people with the help of their agents and spies and find a way to influence them. They wanted to break up the group of those people who insisted on the heritage of the Household (as), their divine knowledge and the divine secrets which were given to them; those people who had with them the deposits which only those believers could have with them who had successfully passed every test.¹

When Bani Abbas found it impossible to overcome and take control of the group of pious people, they thought of another plan which was to infiltrate their group and collect information about them so that they could distinguish them.

These rulers knew that the birth of the promised Mahdi (may Allah hasten his appearance) was very near. However, the time of his birth

1. Al-Saffar, Basa'ir al-Darajat p. 14; Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:401/hadith 1.

was unknown to them. Therefore, they used the method that Pharaoh used when trying to prevent the birth of Moses (as). They thought they were successful in stopping Imam Mahdi (as) from being born. Therefore, they put the Imams (as) under observation so as to be able to stop Imam Mahdi's (as) birth whose name had made them very afraid. That is why they influenced even their personal lives and by appointing agents ordered to report about each and everything related to the Imams (as). Al-Mamun's insistence on marrying his daughter Umm al-Fadhl to Imam Jawad (as) is the best example of what we have said above.

It was not enough for Abbasid rulers, but they had bound the people of the Household (as) in choosing their wives, marriage and the number of children. We see that Imam al-Rida (as) and the Imams (as) after him had a noticeably smaller number of children and wives as compared with the Imams (as) before them.

The Abbasid caliphs tried to deceive people by choosing the names of al-Mahdi and al-Muhtadi for themselves and introducing themselves as the promised Mahdi (may Allah hasten his appearance) whose name and appearance was mentioned in the traditions related to the Prophet (sawas). However they did not know that liars are soon caught, because they had been nourished in a family which had no knowledge of reality and divine virtues. Hence their deviation could not help them much in the achievement of their goals and targets which were to hide the reality of Imam Mahdi's (as) appearance.

The rulers who had failed in distorting the reality of Imam Mahdi (as) and prohibiting his companionship were left with only one choice which was to wait for the promised baby to be born and then kill him. In this manner they could free themselves from the nightmare which had overcome their lives. This nightmare was nothing but Imam Mahdi (may Allah hasten his appearance) who had to come one day and ruin the palaces of those oppressors living in them.

However, the pure certainty of the Abbasids towards this reality was not the only factor for Imam Mahdi (as) to be born and soon after to be killed by the rulers. The political grounds, on one hand, and the necessities of the Muslims, on the other hand, demanded great hope to appear from among the Household (as) of the Prophet (sawas); the one whose good news had already been given by the Prophet (sawas)

and the one who had to live in the hearts of the people ever after. To keep such a hope alive was one of the needs of the Islamic Ummah just as it was one of the most important responsibilities of the Imams (as) which needed to be strengthened by the Imams (as) who were unable to perform the role which was to be practised by Imam Mahdi (may Allah hasten his appearance).

Whatever they could do was to prepare the common Muslims to accept the Imamah of Imam Mahdi (may Allah hasten his appearance) and manifest this reality for them that Imam Mahdi (may Allah hasten his appearance) would remain alive and observe the deeds of the Muslims from behind the curtain of occultation unless the necessary ground for his worldwide revolution was provided which had been promised by Allah and whose good news had been given by His Prophet (sawas).

Against this general need and necessity, the Abbasids increased their efforts for preventing the birth of Imam Mahdi (may Allah hasten his appearance) from happening. Under such conditions, the main responsibilities of Imam Jawad (as) and the Imams (as) after him was to save this hope without letting it lose its spark and brightness in the hearts of the people and their next responsibility was to keep the matter of Imam Mahdi's (as) birth top secret, not letting the rulers to come to know anything about it. By doing this, they wanted to keep the divine leader and the Promised Imam (may Allah hasten his appearance) – who was about to devote his life to Allah and raise the flag of Mohammedan Islam, letting the dreams of all the Prophets (as) come true – from the rulers' harm.

The Imams of the Household (as) with the help of their good virtues and behaviour were successful in dishonouring the deviated rulers; and this was known to be one of the main challenges which they were facing. In this way, they were successful in manifesting to the Islamic nation the difference between the kingship of the caliphs and suitability for real leadership of the Islamic Ummah. Meanwhile, the Ummah was in great need of understanding the difference between the spiritual guideline of the Household (as) and the policies of the government; and they had to understand the false masks which the rulers had put on their faces.

By marrying his daughter to Imam Jawad (as), al-Mamun was nearer to his goal to some extent; because in this way, not only could he put Imam's (as) every movement under his observation but his daughter would also stop Imam (as) from having any child from her and his other wives.¹ With making this target achievable, she could also make the other targets of al-Mamun achievable.

The rulers after al-Mamun followed his line and put the Imams (as) under their observations, and could not think of a better way because al-Mamun had degraded himself by killing Imam al-Rida (as). Those who had killed Imam al-Rida (as), considering him one of his greatest opponents, were now facing another opponent of the same family who was even stronger in making the oppressors defamed and degraded.

On the other hand, the Imamah of Imam Jawad (as), who was just nine years old, had generated some basic questions in the minds of the common people and the Shia of that time which were about his potency and ability for the post of Imamah and divine leadership. It was obligatory for the people to follow their Imam (as) and a person in such a post as Imam (as) must have been able to remove all political and social obstacles which were lying in the way of the people.

Under such conditions and with a succession of questions being asked about his Imamah, Imam Jawad (as) took charge of the people's leadership while he was facing three sequences. However, he had to prove his suitability to the people, even if he had to lose his life in the process. The continuation of divine leadership, proving the truthfulness of the Household (as) and the divine mission were more important than everything else. Looking at these conditions, it seemed to be very important for Imam Jawad (as) to answer every single question and challenge all political and scientific personalities so that

1. Because in those days, despite having a wife like Umm Fadhl, Imam Jawad (as) could buy another slave girl and he could become the father of her son. The jealousy in such a situation can easily be observed in Umm Fadhl's complaint against Imam Jawad (as) to her father.

he would prove the matter of Imamah for both the common and higher classes of people.

Therefore, the most important responsibility of Imam Jawad (as) was to prove the affair of Imamah among the common people as well as the special personalities in the time after his father Imam al-Rida's (as) death. Imam al-Rida (as) had also insisted on his Imamah through different explicit texts. He had made his son Imam Jawad (as) known to some of his companions and followers. Imam al-Rida (as) who was well aware of al-Mamun's final target and his plan behind entrusting him with succession to the throne started benefiting from this chance in the interest of Islam and the Muslims and strengthened the matter of Imamah after him; and finally he was martyred in the same way.

With the answers which Imam Jawad gave in the common gatherings of the caliphs, he had taken a useful step on the path of proving the truthfulness of the divine guideline of the Household (as), his Imamah, his suitability for leadership of the common Muslims and being a Divine Proof for them, for the caliphs and for those scientific people who always remained beside the caliphs. In the meanwhile, Imam Jawad's (as) solid answers had become a great challenge for the caliphs and their scholars and scientific people; the scholars who, as scientific and cultural backing for the caliphs, tried to legalize their deviated government. These people belonged to a group which had fallen in love with their mundane desires and could not see reality by using their rational minds; neither could they see what was going on around them in Islamic society.

The rulers tried to degrade the Imams (as) because they considered them (as) a great danger for their government which they had snatched from the Household (as). Therefore, they used every possible means to decrease the level of their fame. However, the presence of Imam Jawad (as) and other Imams (as) in the royal courts and the answers which they gave to the questions asked by the great scholars and scientific people of their time did not allow the rulers' dreams to come true. On the other hand, they made people aware that Imamah and divine leadership is only for those people who are infallibles and have been appointed to this post by Allah and His messenger (sawas).

2. Islamic Society and Early Imamah in the School of the Household (as)

The presence of Imam Jawad (as) as an Imam was strong proof about the correctness of the Household's (as) belief about Imamah. This phenomenon – the authentication of the post of Imamah and the responsibilities related to it – is a very convincing reason for the correctness of thoughts and beliefs of the Household (as) whose followers are only the Shia. According to this belief, Imamah is a divine post whose people are not chosen by the common man but by Allah for their intellectual, educational, religious and practical suitability for leadership of the Muslims.

All the historians have mentioned the point that at the time of Imam al-Rida's (as) death, his successor Imam Jawad (as) was only nine years old and he was entrusted with the post of Imamah at that age.

This was something very rare and was happening for the first time in the history of the Imams (as). When we examine this reality on the basis of divine standards and historical realities, we find it sufficient for accepting the legitimacy of the school of thought of Imam Jawad (as) as well as the path of the Household (as) which was being represented by Imam Jawad (as). What we can think of this phenomenon is that the Imamah of a little boy who has accepted the responsibility of guiding and leading the Shia in all mental, spiritual, intellectual, religious and jurisprudential ways and who has faced all kinds of hardships and been successful in exams is a great sign of its divinity and there is no doubt in this.

There are some other assumptions, too, which are not so popular. However, we mention these in the following lines:

Firstly: the Shia who had accepted the Imamah of Imam Jawad (as) did not know that he was merely a child.

This assumption is rejected because the divine leaders did not have any gatekeepers, guards and royal managements so that the people would not see them. On the other hand, they did not call the people like the Sufis and inward Fatimids whose claimers remained unknown to the common people. Like his father and forefathers (as), Imam Jawad (as) was also available for the Shia and they could meet him and talk to him face to face. They were in contact with him and

asked him about their religious matters, mental, spiritual and ethical problems.

When Imam Jawad (as) met al-Mamun for the first time, he asked for al-Mamun's permission to let him go back to Madinah. Al-Mamun accepted this and Imam (as) went back to Madinah passing most of his life there. In this manner, Imam Jawad (as) was always among the Muslims belonging to different classes and categories including the Shia believers of his Imamah and leadership and they all could see him any time.

Therefore, the first assumption can be rejected because it is against the nature of contact and relation which had been between the Imams (as) and their followers and other Muslims. Also, Imam Jawad (as) was under the observation of the Abbasid caliph. At the time of marrying the daughter of the caliph, the members of the Abbasid family were not happy with this and they complained to al-Mamun; and it is the best proof for rejection of the first assumption.

Secondly: the Shia who accepted the Imamah of Imam Jawad (as) did not have intellectual and scientific maturity and did not have the power to decide what was right and what was wrong about the Imamah of a child who was claiming to be Imam.

This assumption can also be rejected on the basis of history, the history of the Shia caste and the level of their knowledge, because the Shia were trained by Imam Baqir (as) and Imam Sadiq (as) and were establishing a great school of Islamic thought all over the world. This school of thought had passed two generations now with the students of Imam Sadiq (as) and Imam Kazim (as) and their students. The leading Shia of the two generations with great knowledge worked in the fields of jurisprudence, interpretation, theology, Hadith, ethics and other Islamic sciences. Therefore it does not seem to be possible for such a group of people to accept the Imamah of a young person without seeing any strong signs, backing and logical reason. It is also to be kept in mind that in those days accepting the Imamah of a person meant facing many kinds of hardship and problems such as limitations, pressure, pursuit, threats and death.

Let us consider a fifty or sixty-year-old intellectual with a great command of all branches of knowledge who claims to be an imam on

the basis of his high knowledge, not because he is really an Imam. It seems to be natural that a number of people who are well aware of his knowledge and wisdom will accept his claim and become his followers and believers; and such an assumption seems to be acceptable. However, the matter becomes more serious when facing a great group of knowledgeable and well-educated people. Certainly, a little boy of nine cannot betray a group of such a high knowledge and wisdom establishing the biggest scientific and intellectual school of thought in the Islamic world with just his false claim to being the Imam. Let us not forget that the students of this school of thought were spread all over the Islamic society of those days like Kufah, Qum and Madinah, and were playing active roles. They were also in contact with Imam Jawad (as). They asked Imam Jawad (as) for answers to their questions and religious matters. They also took religious funds to him and gifts from all over the country and the Islamic world. Certainly, the people of such a school of thought with such good wisdom would never accept the Imamah of a little boy without certain documents.

Thirdly: the meaning of ‘Imam’ and ‘Imamah’ was not clear to the Shia and they considered Imamah as blood relationship and heredity. They did not know who a real Imam was, what his values and positions were and what conditions were necessary for a person to qualify for the post of Imamah!

The heritage of successive traditions and Hadiths related to the conditions of Imamah which the Muslims and the Shia had from Imam Ali (as) till Imam al-Rida's (as) period of Imamah, certainly rejected the above-mentioned assumption. This is what has made the Shia distinguished as compared with the followers of other religions and castes who consider the post of Imamah as something related to human beings and who consider it to be very easy for any human to claim to be an Imam.

The word ‘tashayyu’ came into being on the basis of deep knowledge of Divine Imamah – which is one of the main issues in Shia; according to the Shia an Imam is someone who is extraordinary and matchless in his wisdom, ethics, wording and behaviour. This was something which had been mentioned so many times by a great

number of people from the time of Imam Ali (as) till the period of Imam al-Rida (as).¹

In this way all specialties and qualities of an Imam (as) had become manifest for the Shia. The narrator says: "After Imam al-Rida's (as) martyrdom I entered the city of Madinah and started searching for his successor. I was told: the successor of Imam al-Rida (as) lives in a village near Madinah. I went to the village. There was a house in the city which was given as inheritance to the sons of Imam Musa bin Ja'far (as) from their father. I went near the house and I found the house filled with people. One of Imam al-Rida's (as) brothers was sitting before the people, but the people were saying: "He is not the Imam after Imam al-Rida (as) because we have heard that after [Imam] Hasan and [Imam] Husayn (as), Imamah will not be entrusted to two brothers."²

We can see that all genealogical and spiritual qualities of Imam were clear and manifest for the Shia. Therefore, the third assumption can also be rejected because of the successive traditions which the Shia already knew about before the Imamah of Imam Jawad (as).

Fourthly: The Shia believe in wrong things in a way. This assumption is also rejected. It is not because we believe in the piety of this group [the Shia], but it is the condition of the Shia in those days which makes the above-mentioned assumption void and unacceptable. The reason for this is also very clear. Shia has never been a means for gaining money, power and property; but being a Shia meant to be under observation, being punished and tortured, and suffering imprisonment, deprivation, difficulties and destruction. The path of Shia was always difficult and filled with the thorns of enmity and rivalry against those walking on this path. Therefore, accepting a false Imamah was of no use; neither could it be beneficial to the Shia. On the other hand, Shia was not a good choice for reaching governmental posts and coming into power. So why would wise,

1. Refer to Tuhaf al-Uqul for the detail of this Hadith which is about Imam and Imamate and has been narrated from Imam Reza (as).

2. Ibn Shahr'ashub, al-Manaqib 4:382-343; Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:89-90.

famous and knowledgeable Shia accept a false Imamah which would bring them a great number of tortures and deprivations? On the other hand, how can one's mind accept that a person should accept something and put himself in danger willingly and deliberately?

Certainly those conditions are the best proofs for the reality of the beliefs of the Shia; the beliefs which had been realized by the Shia and which had been accepted and followed by them under every condition, even though they lost their lives walking on this path.

Therefore, we are left with only one option which is to accept the fourth assumption which says that with his early Imamah and standing up to all the motivations, questions and tests, Imam Jawad (as) provided the best historical and scientific reasoning to prove his – the Household's (as) – reality, method and path; the path which was now being observed in the form of Imam Jawad's (as) Imamah and leadership of the Islamic world. This path, for the first time, was presented to the Muslims at the time of the Prophet (sawas) who wanted the Muslims to gain scientific and doctrinal perfection and establish Islamic civilization on the basis of divine values.

The huge and valuable heritage which Imam Jawad (as) has left for us is a great proof for his active role in the manifestation of Shia belief in the field of Islamic leadership which is also insisted on by the verses of the holy Qur'an and the traditions of the Prophet (sawas).¹

3. Imam Jawad's (as) Reaction against Deviated Concepts

'Exaggeration' was among those phenomena which appeared in different ways and manners; one of which was exaggeration about the companions of the Prophet (sawas). Like other Imams (as), Imam Jawad (as) also rose against this phenomenon whenever he got a chance to do so. Once he entered a discussion with Yahya bin Aktham in a gathering where al-Mamun and many other people were also present. In this discussion, Imam (as) rejected those exaggerated

1. This part has been provided from the lecture of Ayatullah Shahid Sayyid Muhammad Baqir Sadr (May his soul rest in peace) about Imam Jawad with a little adaptation.

concepts which were being told about the companions of the Prophet (sawas). The detail of the story is given below:

It has been narrated that after al-Mamun had married his daughter to Imam Jawad (as), one day he, along with a great number of people as well as Yahya bin Aktham, were gathered together. Abu Ja'far (as) was also present in that gathering. Yahya said to him: "O the son of the Prophet (sawas)! It has been narrated: "Gabriel came to the Prophet (sawas) and said: "O Muhammad! Your Allah has paid His regards and has said: "Ask Abu Bakr whether he is satisfied with Me? [He must know that] I am pleased with him." What do you say about this?

Imam (as) said: I am not denying Abu Bakr's virtues, but the narrator of the news must also keep in mind the tradition which has been narrated in the Farewell pilgrimage; when the Prophet (sawas) said:

Those who have lied about me will increase their lies even after me. Thus [beware that] one who lies about me has provided hellfire for himself. So whenever you receive a Hadith related to me, compare it with the Book [the holy Qur'an] and my Sunnah. If it agrees with them, accept it, otherwise, leave it.

Then Imam Jawad (as) said: This story (about Abu Bakr) is not compatible with the Book of Allah, because Allah has said:

﴿وَلَقَدْ خَلَقْنَا الْإِنْسَانَ وَنَعْلَمُ مَا تُوَسْوِسُ بِهِ نَفْسُهُ وَنَحْنُ أَقْرَبُ إِلَيْهِ مِنْ حَبْلِ الْوَرِيدِ﴾

*"Certainly we have created man and we know to what his soul tempts him, and we are nearer to him than his jugular vein."*¹

In this case, [since there is a contradiction between this Hadith and the verse of the holy Qur'an] it seems as if Allah did not know whether Abu Bakr is pleased with Him or not; therefore, He is asking Abu Bakr about what is going into his mind and heart; which is rejected and impossible rationally.

1. *Surat Qaf, 50:16.*

Yahya said: It is narrated that: Abu Bakr and Umar on the earth are like Gabriel and Michael in the sky [and enjoy the same high position.]?

Imam (as) said: This Hadith needs to be observed with care because Gabriel and Michael are the favourite angels of Allah and have never committed any sins, neither have they been disobedient to Allah even for a single moment; but Abu Bakr and Umar were pagans, and they accepted Islam after remaining pagans for most of their lives. Therefore, it is impossible to compare them with Gabriel and Michael who are two angels of Allah.

Yahya said: It is narrated that: Abu Bakr and Umar are the rulers and great people among the old people living in paradise." What do you say about this?

Imam (as) said: It is also impossible because the people of paradise are all young and any old person cannot be found among them. This news has been fabricated by Bani Umayyad against the Hadith of the Prophet (sawas) in which he has said: "Hasan and Husayn (as) are the two rulers of the youth of paradise.

Yahya said: It is narrated that Umar Ibn Khattab is the candle of heaven.

Imam (as) said: This is also impossible because if heaven does not illuminate with the light of the most nearest angels of Allah, the Prophet Adam (as), the Prophet Muhammad (sawas) and all the prophets (as) of Allah then how is possible for it to be illuminated with the light of Umar?

Yahya said: It is narrated that 'Sukayna' (the wind in paradise with the human face) will speak with the voice of Umar.

Imam (as) said: I am not denying the virtue of Umar but Abu Bakr is better than him [and if such a thing is possible then the creature must speak in the voice of Abu Bakr] who has said on the pulpit of the Prophet (sawas): "The devil has overcome me and harms me, so whenever I am distracted, bring me back on track."

Yahya said: "It has been narrated from the Prophet (sawas) who said: "If I was not made a messenger, Umar would be made prophet instead of me."

Imam (as) said:

"The Book of Allah is more authentic than this saying. Allah has said:

﴿وَإِذْ أَخَذْنَا مِنَ النَّبِيِّينَ مِيثَاقَهُمْ وَمِنْكَ وَمِنْ نُوحٍ﴾

*"[Recall] when we took a pledge from the prophets, and from you and from Noah and Abraham and Moses and Jesus son of Mary, and we took from them a solemn pledge."*¹

The Lord who has made a covenant with the Prophets (as), who will break it? On the other hand, the prophets (as) never believe in anyone but Allah even for a single moment. Then how is it possible that Allah makes someone prophet who passed most of his life as a pagan? The Prophet of Allah (sawas) has said about his prophecy: "I received the order of my prophecy when Adam was in a state of between body and soul [and was not born yet]."

Yahya said: The Prophet (sawas) has said: when I did not receive any revelation, I became certain that it was being revealed to the family of Khattab.

[What do you say about this?]

Imam (as) said: This is also impossible because the Prophet (sawas) must have been very sure about his prophethood because Allah has said:

﴿اللَّهُ يَصْطَفِي مِنَ الْمَلَائِكَةِ رُسُلًا وَمِنَ النَّاسِ﴾

*"Allah chooses messengers from angels and from mankind. Indeed Allah is all-hearing, all-seeing."*²

How is it possible that the prophethood is taken from someone chosen by Allah and given to someone who passed most of his life as a pagan?"

1. Surat Ahzab, 33:7.

2. Surat Hajj, 22:75.

Yahya said: "It is narrated that the Prophet (sawas) said: If the torment of Allah descends no one but Umar will remain safe against it."

Imam Jawad (as) said: This concept is also impossible because Allah has said:

﴿وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ لِيُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَأَنْتَ فِيهِمْ ۚ وَمَا كَانَ اللَّهُ مُعَذِّبَهُمْ وَهُمْ يَسْتَغْفِرُونَ﴾

*"But Allah will not punish them while you are in their midst, nor will Allah punish them while they plead for forgiveness."*¹

We see that Allah is giving the news that He will not impose His torment on the people while His Messenger (as) is there among the people praying for them.²

The tradition which we read in the above lines is a great example of the deviations at the time of the Amawide and Abbasid caliphs. The story also mentions the two calamities – deviation and innovation – showing how they had influenced the people despite the material being contrary to the verses of the holy Qur'an. All this shows nothing but the low level of the royal scholars' knowledge. Certainly the common people who used to follow them were even more ignorant.

Imam Jawad's (as) discussion with Yahya bin Aktham, the chief justice of al-Mamun shows the courage, strong logic and great role of the Imam (as) in correction of the dangerous deviations, for which they tried to rectify and justify the mistakes of some of the companions of the Prophet (sawas). They did this to present an ugly picture of the religion of Islam. Another reason behind this discussion was to show the people the real face of the caliphs who had hidden their realities behind such things; and the people had an ambiguous and dismal picture of them in their minds through history.

1. *Surat Anfal*, 8:33.

2. *Ihtijaj* 2:477-480; *al-Majlisi*, *Bihar al-Anwar* 50:80-83/hadith 6.

4. *The Grief of Islamic Ummah, a Great Concern of Imam Jawad (as)*

Serving the people, calling them to acceptance of Mohammedan Islam and guiding them on the path of the Household (as) were among the most necessary concerns of Imam Jawad (as). In this discourse we will mention some of these cases:

When Abu Ja'far (as) left Baghdad towards Madinah and Umm al-Fadhl was with him, people went out escorting him. When he got to the street of the Gate of Kufa, he went to the house of al-Musaib at sunset. He came off his ride and went to the mosque to offer prayer. In the yard of the mosque there was a lote tree which had yet borne fruit. He asked for some water to perform wudu. He performed wudu at the base of the lote tree and went in to offer prayers. The people stood behind him and started offering congregational prayer. In the first Rak'at, Imam Jawad (as) recited *Surat Hamd* and in the second Rak'at he recited *Surat Nasr*. In the second Rak'at he recited *Surat Hamd* followed by *Surat Tawhid* and raised his hands for *Qunut* before going to *Ruku'*. After having finished his prayer, he waited for a short period, praised Allah and then stood and offered for Rak'ats of *Nafila* prayer without saying *Ta'qibat* of his prayer.

After finishing the *Nafila* prayer, he said *Ta'qibat* and prostrated two times thanking Allah. When he had finished the prayers, he went out and when he got to the lote tree, people found it had good fruit. They ate from the fruit and found it sweet and with no stones. People bade Imam al-Jawad (as) farewell and he left for Madinah.¹

By presenting the issues and concrete affairs, Imam Jawad (as) provided the best reasoning for his Imamah. On the other hand, his great attention towards serving the people made them aware of how important it was to serve the people in Islam. Also it attracted people's attention towards him because they saw his generosity and good behaviour in practice. The following stories are some examples of Imam Jawad's (as) serving the people:

1. Al-Tabarsi, *I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda* 2:105-106;

Firstly: Shaykh Abu Bakr bin Isma'il narrates: I said to Abu Ja'far the son of al-Rida (as): I have a slave girl [or daughter] who is not happy because of pain.

He said: "Bring her to me." And I did so.

He said to her: "What are you not happy with?"

She said: "There is pain in my knees."

Abu Ja'far (as) swept his hand over her knee and she left. After this, she never complained about the pain in her knee.¹

Secondly: Muhammad bin Umayr Waqid Razi narrated: I met Abu Ja'far son of al-Rida (as) with my brother who had a respiratory disorder and was breathing very quickly. He complained of his sickness to Abu Ja'far (as). Abu Ja'far (as) said: "May Allah cure your illness."

We left Imam (as). The illness of my brother had now gone and he did not have this problem till the very last moment of his life.²

Thirdly: Muhammad bin Umayr narrates: I felt a great pain in my midriff once every seven days which lasted for some days. I requested Abu Ja'far (as) to pray for me so that my illness would be cured. He said: May Allah also bless you.

The illness referred to left forever after he prayed for me.³

Fourthly: Ali bin Jarir reported: I was in the presence of Imam Jawad (as) when a sheep of the house which belonged to one of his slave girls was missing. At this time, one of the neighbors was brought to the Imam (as) on a charge of theft. The Imam said, "Woe to you! Let

Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:89/hadith 4; Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:89-289; al-Nayshaburi, Rawdat al-Wa'izin pp. 241-242.

1. Al-Tusi, al-Thaqib fi'l-Manaqib p. 521/hadith 12; al-Rawandi, al-Khara'ij wa al-Jara'ih 1:376/hadith 3; Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:46-47.

2. Ibid.

3. Al-Rawandi, al-Khara'ij wa al-Jara'ih 1:376-377/hadith 4; Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:47/hadith 23.

him go. He has not stolen the sheep. The sheep is in another's house [and mentioned his name]. Go and find it there."

They went to the mentioned house and found the sheep there. They arrested the owner of the house, tore his clothes to shreds and beat him up, but he swore that he had not stolen the sheep. They brought him to the Imam (as) who asked, "Why have you oppressed him? The sheep entered his house and this man was not aware of it." Then the Imam (as) appeased the wronged man and gave him an amount of money to make up for his clothes and the beating."¹

Qasim bin al-Hasan narrated: I was between Mecca and Madinah when a poor person from amongst the Bedouins asked them for something. I felt sorry for him and gave him a piece of bread. When he went away, a great wind started blowing which removed my turban and I did not know where it had gone. When I entered Madinah, I went to Abu Ja'far bin al-Rida (as). He said to me: O Abu al-Qasim! Have you lost your turban on the way?

I said: "Yes, I have."

The Imam (as) said to his servant: "Bring him his turban."

The slave brought the turban and gave it to me. I said to Abu Ja'far (as): O son of the Prophet (sawas), how did my turban reach your hands?"

Imam (as) said: "You gave charity to the Bedouin and Allah respected your charity. That is why He has returned your turban to you. [Beware] Allah will never spoil the rewards of those doing good."

What has just been mentioned is like a drop in an ocean; one of countless examples of the Imams' (as) services to the Muslims. Certainly the great effects of these actions are not unknown and ambiguous for those people who consider the language of action more useful than the language of words. That is why Imam Sadiq (as) said:

1. Al-Rawandi, *al-Khara'ij wa al-Jara'ih* 1:377-378/hadith 6; Al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 50:47-48/hadith 25.

"Call people [towards goodness] not only with the help of your language [but with the help of your actions].¹

1. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 2:77/hadith 9.

CHAPTER TWO

IMAM JAWAD (AS) AND THE NECESSITIES OF THE PIOUS GROUP

In this section, a number of topics will be studied such as:

1. Imam Jawad (as) against the Doubts Regarding his Imamah

Imam Jawad (as) took charge of Imamah and leadership of the people and started practising his divine responsibilities at a young age. The presence of a young Imam was not something new, because there had been Jesus (as) who was assigned a prophet when he was only in his cradle. Although the early Imamah was not something new, doubts were coming into the minds and hearts of some of the companions of the Household (as) and those believing in the matter of their Imamah after the death of the Prophet (sawas); and they asked questions about how it was that a little boy could become Imam. All the same, Imam Jawad (as) was successful in answering all the questions which were being asked in this regard with wisdom, knowledge and experience and those doubts which were forming in the minds of the people who did not even mention them.

The affair of the succession of a little boy as an Imam and the caliph of the Prophet (sawas) was doubtful for some of the companions and followers of the Household (as). Certainly, the questions which they put to Imam al-Rida (as) about this matter were being answered by his son in the form of traditions and other ways, the news of which also reached the heads of the Shia living elsewhere such as Egypt, Hijaz, Iraq, Iran and other countries.

Doubting his Imamah was something which needed to be removed from the minds of the people; let us not forget that these doubts were increasing after the death of Imam al-Rida (as). The following traditions will make clear the doubtful atmosphere of those days as well as the efforts by Imam Jawad (as) for the removal of this atmosphere:

Sayid Murtaza mentions in his book: When Imam al-Rida (as) passed away, Imam Jawad (as) was just a child of seven. The Shia of Baghdad and other cities became confused about the affair of Imamah and started disagreeing with each other. A group of the Shia like Raian bin al-Salt, Safawan bin Yahya, Muhammad bin Hakim, Abd al-Rahman bin Hajjaj, Yunus Abd al-Rahman and other great men and reliable Shia gathered at the house of Abd al-Rahman bin Hajjaj in "Barka Zilol". They discussed the matter of the Imamah and began to weep for they had just lost Imam al-Rida (as). Yunus bin Abd al-Rahman said to them: "Stop your weeping and start thinking about whom we should consult until this child grows up."

At this time Raian bin al-Salt stood, took his collar and started slapping him on the face. He said to him: You are displaying your faith and religiousness for us while you are pagan in your heart! [Beware that] If it is decreed by Allah the Almighty, then a one-day-old child can be better than an old man, but if it is not decreed by Allah, then even if one lives for one thousand years, he will be considered as a common person. This is worth pondering over.

The other people who were present also condemned him. When the season for pilgrimage of Hajj came, a significant number of scholars and jurisprudents of Baghdad and other countries came to Yathrib following the death of Imam al-Rida (as) in order to ascertain the new imam. They were about eighty men, as historians have mentioned in their books. When they arrived in Yathrib, they went to the house of Imam Abu Abdullah Sadiq (as). The house of the Imam (as) was empty of people. They entered and sat on a rug. At that time, Abdullah the son of Imam Musa Kazim (as) came to them and sat at their head. A man stood up and called out to the ulama, "This is the son of the messenger of Allah (sawas). Whoever has a question let him ask it." Many questions were asked but all the answers were wrong. The Shia were very sad to see all this. The jurisprudents stood and were about to leave the gathering. They were saying to themselves: "If Abu Ja'far was able to answer these questions, we would not be hearing such wrong answers from Abdullah."

While they were in this state, a door near the front of the meeting was opened from which emerged Muwaffaq the servant telling the people the news of Abu Ja'far's (as) appearance. The ulama and the

jurisprudents stood up out of respect and began glorifying him. He wore two cloths and had a turban, and a lock of hair hanging towards his ears, and he was wearing shoes. The people stayed where they were. The man who had asked the first question asked it for the second time. Imam (as) gave him the right answer. The attendants were very pleased to see this. They prayed for Imam (as) and praised him for his knowledge. The one who asked told Imam al-Jawad (as) of the fatwa of his uncle Abdullah the son of Imam Kazim (as) concerning the same matter. Imam al-Jawad (as) turned to his uncle and said: There is no God but Him. It is very hard for you to be in the presence of Allah on the Day of Resurrection and hear Him saying: Why did you give such fatwa about which you did not know anything while there existed in the Ummah one who was more aware than you?¹

It has been narrated that after Imam Al-Rida's (as) martyrdom, the young Abu Ja'far (as) was brought into the Prophet's (sawas) mosque. He sat on the first step of the pulpit and started saying: I am Muhammad son of Ali [bin Musa] al-Rida; I am Jawad; I am aware of the people's genealogy while they are in the loins of their fathers. I am aware of your manifested and hidden affairs and to what you want to achieve and to what is going to happen to you more than anyone else. I have gained [this knowledge] from the knowledge which has been given to us by the Creator of all creatures after He had created the heavens and earth. If the wrong people would not support each other; if the rulers were not astray and if there were not a great number of doubtful people, I would say something which would make the people stunned and astonished more than ever.²

It has been narrated from Isma'il bin Bazi' that he said: "I asked Abu Ja'far (as): Is it possible for an Imam (as) to be less than seven years old?

He said: "Yes, even less than five years."³

1. 'Uyun al-mujizat pp. 108-109; Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 5:99-100.

2. Mashariq Anwar al-Yaqin p. 98; Bihar al-Anwar 50:108/hadith 27.

3. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:384, Madinah al-Ma'ajiz 7:279.

Ali ibn Asbat said the following: Once I saw Abu Ja'far (as) who had come out to me and I began to look at him from head to toe so I could describe him to our people in Egypt. I was looking until he sat down and said, "O Ali, Allah has supported His argument against the people in the case of Imamah (Leadership with Divine Authority) just as He has done so in the case of the prophets. He has said:

﴿وَأَتَيْنَاهُ الْحُكْمَ صَبِيًّا﴾

*"We gave authority to him (John) over the people during his childhood."*¹

﴿وَلَمَّا بَلَغَ أَشُدَّهُ﴾

*"When he attained maturity, God gave him strength, wisdom and knowledge. Thus do we reward those who do good."*²

﴿وَبَلَغَ أَرْبَعِينَ سَنَةً﴾

*"When he grew to manhood and became forty years old."*³

It comes to pass that wisdom comes to a prophet when he is merely a child or it may come to a prophet when he is forty years old."⁴

Obviously the authentication of his Imamah at a young age and the scientific challenges with Yahya bin Aktham, the chief justice of the Abbasid government and other famous old jurists were divine miracles; which also shows his great connection with Allah the Honorable the Exalted. Moreover, these discussions show the invisible help which Allah had blessed him with. In the next chapters, we will study his branches of knowledge related to the holy Qur'an.

1. Surat Maryam, 19:12.

2. Surat Al-Qasas, 28:14.

3. Surat Al-Ahqaf, 46:15.

4. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:384/hadith 7; Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:292-293; Madinah al-Ma'ajiz 7:279/hadith 2323; Bihar al-Anwar 25:100/hadith 1.

2. Imam Jawad (as) the Cultural Builder of the Pious Group

The Imams (as) with their wise positioning and activities made their targets achievable. They had made the realization of honour of Islam and the Muslims the goal of their lives. Imam Jawad (as) also followed the path of his father and forefathers (as). Despite all the difficulties, he tried his best to provide the Islamic nation with honour. In this section we will read about Imam's (as) activities in different fields including preparing the Islamic Ummah and the forefronts of this religion:

A. Establishment of Thought

Imam Jawad (as) paid great attention to Muslim belief. This is what we can easily find in his scientific and doctrinal heritage; the heritage which has the original elements of pure belief. Here we will mention two examples:

Calling towards Pure Monotheism

Monotheism is the base of Islamic belief. Every Muslim's true belief in the oneness of Allah provides the base for his other beliefs and doctrines. Therefore, Imam Jawad (as) tried to make the topic of Monotheism manifest to the people. His discussion with Dawud bin Qasim Ja'fari is a great example of that.

Dawud bin Qasim Ja'fari says: I said to Abu Ja'far the second (as): What is the meaning of the One in the verse saying:

﴿قُلْ هُوَ اللَّهُ أَحَدٌ﴾

*"Say, He is Allah, the One."*¹

Imam Jawad (as) said: It is He whom tongues have agreed on His oneness as Allah has said:

1. *Surat Al-Tawhid, 112: 1.*

﴿وَلَيْنَ سَأَلْتَهُمْ مَنْ خَلَقَ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ وَسَخَّرَ الشَّمْسَ وَالْقَمَرَ لَيَقُولُنَّ
اللَّهُ فَأَنَّى يُؤْفَكُونَ﴾

"And if you ask them who has created the heavens and the earth, they will certainly say: Allah." They [who say these words] will say that: Allah has a partner and a spouse."¹

I said: What is the meaning of the verse saying:

﴿لَا تُدْرِكُهُ الْبَصَرُ﴾

"Vision comprehends Him not, and He comprehends (all) vision?"²

Imam Jawad (as) said: O Abu Hashim, the imagination of hearts is more accurate than the sight of eyes. You may perceive with your imagination Sind and India and other countries that you have not visited although you do not perceive them with your eyes. [In case of Allah, it is not so because even] the imagination of hearts does not perceive Him, then how about the sight of eyes?³

Imam (as) was asked: Is it possible to say that Allah is a thing?

He said: Yes, when excluding Him from the two limits; the limit of *ta'til* (stripping Allah of His attributes) and the limit of *tashbih* (comparison).⁴

Abu Hashim Ja'fari also narrated: I was in the presence of Abu Ja'far the second (as) when a person said to him: Tell me about the Exalted Lord, He has names and attributes in His book. Are these names and attributes (equal) Him?

1. Surat Al-'Ankabut, 29: 61.

2. Surat Al-An'am, 6:103.

3. Ehtijaj al-Tabarsi 2:465/hadith 319; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 4:39/hadith 17.

4. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi, 82 1./hadith 28; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 3:260/hadith 9.

Imam Jawad (as) said: This question has two faces; if you say that He is His attributes, this will mean that He can be described by number and quantity and Allah is far above this. And if you say: these names and attributes have existed since no beginning, this will have two meanings; if you say they have existed with Him in His knowledge and He deserves them, you are right and if you say: their script, spelling and pronunciation have existed, this will give another meaning. Glory be to Allah and He is far above to have anything or any associate with him. Allah has existed where there was and is no creation and then He created them to be the means between Him and His creatures for them to beseech and worship Him. They are His mention and He who is mentioned by the mention is Allah the one and only God who has existed since no beginning.

The meanings of His attributes have always existed and separating and uniting them does not befit Him. Something divisible has the capability to separate and unite and it is not possible to say that Allah is united nor that He is many or few but He is God in His essence; and whatever is other than One is divisible and Allah is the One that is indivisible. He is not thought to be many or few, much or little. Every divisible thing is thought to be many or few and is a creature that has a creator.

Your saying that Allah has power over all things means that nothing at all fails Him. He is not said to be unable but all other than Him are unable.

Also, your saying that He is aware means that you deny ignorance from Him and ascribe ignorance to all other than Him. If Allah annihilates things, He annihilates script and spelling. He does not end and still exists who has ever been and always will be, aware.

The person asking kept on: How is our Lord called All-Hearing?

Imam Jawad (as) said: Nothing that is perceived by ears is unperceivable by Him though we do not describe Him as having the sensible hearing in the head. Also we call Him All-Seeing because nothing that is seen by eyes is invisible to Him such as colours, men and other things though we do not describe Him as having eyes. We call Him 'gentle' because He knows everything about gentle (tiny) things such as insects and things tinier than insects. He knows the

position of their organs, reason, lust, copulation, sympathy with their descendants, communication with each other, and carrying food to their offspring in mountains, valleys and deserts. We know that their creator is gentle without manner because manner is for fashioned creatures.

Our Lord is called mighty not for the might of violence available in creatures. If His might is the might of violence, He will be compared and there will be a possibility of increase, and that which undergoes increase is possible to undergo decrease, and that which is deficient is not God, and that which is not God is unable but our Lord is exalted, high. He has no like, no opposite, no equal, no manner, no end and no danger. It is prohibited for hearts to compare Him, for minds to limit Him, and for consciences to fashion Him. He is far above the aspects of His creatures and the features of His people, and exalted be He in high exaltation above that.¹

Standing against Exaggeration

Exaggeration about the Household of the Prophet (sawas) was one of the most dangerous affairs which the people were facing. To remove this deviant phenomenon, the Imams (as) rejected the thoughts and ideas of those people who were exaggerating about the purified family of the Prophet (sawas). They ordered their followers to keep themselves away from the group of *ghulat*. Like his father and forefathers (as), Imam Jawad (as) also paid great attention to this phenomenon and thought. He was very careful not to let the seeds of exaggeration be spread in society and betray the simple people. The proofs and examples of this trend are listed in those stories which historians have mentioned in their books. For example, Husayn bin Muhammad Ash'ari narrated: One of the companions, Abdullah bin Razin, has said to me: I was living in Madinah. Abu Ja'far came to the mosque of the Messenger of Allah (sawas) every day at noon. First he went to the rock – which was placed at the entrance of the mosque – and stood beside the holy tomb of the Prophet (sawas)

1. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 82 1, pp.116-117/hadith 7; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 4:153-154/hadith 1; Ehtijaj al-Tabarsi 2:467-469.

paying salam to him. Then he went to the house of Lady Fatima (peace be upon her), took off his shoes and offered noon prayers. One day, I was betrayed by Satan. When he went down, I took up some soil from where his footprints were.

I waited for him to come so that I would do what I had planned. At noon, the Imam (as) seemed to be coming on his mount. Unlike other days, he did not dismount but went towards the rock near the door of the mosque. When he reached there, he dismounted. Then he went into the mosque, paid his respects to the Prophet (sawas) and went back to where he had to offer his prayer. He offered his prayer in the same way for some days. This time, I thought to myself: when he takes off his shoes, I will take some soil from when he puts his foot. The next day, he came at noon and entered the mosque. First he went beside the holy tomb of the Prophet (sawas), then paid salam and then went to where he offered his prayers. But this time, he did not take off his shoes. He repeated this action for some days.

I thought to myself: I will not get what I am looking for here, so I must go to the door of the bathhouse. Therefore, I started searching for the bathhouse where the Imam (as) used to go to take a bath. I was told: he goes to the bathhouse which is in Baqi' and which belongs to one of the descendents of Talha. One day when Abu Ja'far decided to go to the bathhouse, I also went towards it and waited for him at the door of the bathhouse. I started talking to the owner of the bathhouse. The owner said to me: Quickly go to the bathhouse if you want to because after some time you will not get a chance to.

I asked him: Why?

He said: Ibn al-Rida [Imam Jawad (as)] is going to come.

I asked: Who is Ibn al-Rida (as)?

He said: He is a pious person from the Household of the Prophet (as).

I asked: Can't anyone else go to the bathhouse when he comes to take a bath?

He said: I make the bathhouse empty when he comes.

I was still talking to the owner of the bathhouse when Abu Ja'far arrived along with his servants. There was a mat in the hands of one

of his servants. The slave entered the dressing room before Imam (as) and spread out the mat. Imam (as) reached the door of the bathhouse. He paid salam. He entered the bathhouse with his mount and then sat down on the mat. I said to the owner of the bathhouse: Did you call this man a pious person?

He said: By God I haven't seen such behaviour from him till now and this is the first time I am seeing him behaving in such a manner.

I said to myself: By God I have hurt him and I will never try to get what I have been intending. I made a promise to myself about it. The same day, Abu Ja'far came to the mosque of the Prophet (sawas) on the back of his mount. He paid salam to the Prophet (sawas); went where he used to offer his prayer; took off his shoes and started offering his prayer.¹

B. Strengthening the Scientific Bases

Another field in which Imam Jawad (as) showed his activities was to take the sciences to the peak and the level of their perfection which were founded by his father and forefathers (as). For this and by answering the scientific and jurisprudential questions of the Shia and the Islamic nation of that time, he provided them with a treasure of great knowledge; the most important of which was related to the perfection of scientific methods and tools.

Perfection of Methodolgy of Juriprudence

Theological principles are thought to be a part of the common method for the understanding and deduction of religious rulers. Here we will briefly mention the method of Imam Jawad (as) in this regard:

According to his scientific method, the deduction of theoretical rules from the apparent meanings of the verses of the holy Qur'an is not permissible; it becomes permissible only when the interpreter is fully aware of the Imams' (as) interpretation in this regard.

1. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 82 1:493-494/hadith 2; Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:59-61; Ibn Shahr'ashub, al-Manaqib 4:395-396.

Imam Jawad (as) narrated a tradition from Imam Sadiq (as) that, once, a man had asked his father some questions and he answered by saying: Say to them: Was there any contradiction in the knowledge of Allah that the Prophet (sawas) had divulged? If they say 'No, there was no contradiction', then you would say to them: Does he, who legislates a verdict having contradiction, contradict the messenger of Allah? They will say 'yes.' If they say 'no', they will contradict their first saying. You would say to them: But none knows its (the Qur'an's interpretation except Allah and those who are firmly rooted in knowledge. If they say: Who are those who are firmly rooted in knowledge?' You would say: It is he whose doings have no contradiction. If they say: Who is he? You would say: It was the messenger of Allah (sawas)...if the messenger of Allah had not appointed a successor after him, he would have wasted those who would be the successors after him...he asked, 'Does the Qur'an not suffice for you?' He said, 'Yes, if they find an interpreter to it.' He asked, 'Has the messenger of Allah (sawas) not interpreted it?' He said, 'Yes, he has interpreted it to one man and declared to the nation the position of that man. It was Ali bin Abu Talib (as).'

¹

Also he said: "A *muhkam* is not two things but one. Whoever gives a judgment that has no contradiction, his judgment is from the judgment of Allah and whoever gives a judgment that has contradiction and sees that he is right; his judgment is after the judgment of Satan."

²

Among his scientific methods, one was to follow the Hadiths of the Imams (as) which had been mentioned in authentic books. Here we will read one of the traditions:

Muhammad bin Hasan bin Abu Khalid Shanbula narrated: "I said to Abu Ja'far the second (as): May I be ransom for you, our Shaykhs (religious scholars) have narrated different Hadiths from Abu Ja'far [Imam Muhammad Baqir (as)] and Abu Abdullah [Imam Sadiq (as)]. Since they dissimulated, therefore, they hid their books and we did

1. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:250; Bihar al-Anwar 25:79.

2. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:248; Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 25:72/hadith 62.

not get a chance to hear their traditions. Their books reached us only when they had passed away. [What is our responsibility regarding the books now?]

Imam (as) said: Repeat them as they are the truth [and exaggeration and false things have not been mixed up with them.]¹

Permissibility of acting according to one's own thinking by he who has asked his Imam's (as) permission:

Rijal al-Kashshi quotes Khayran Khadim as saying: I sent eight Dirham for my master and asked him [through a letter]: May I be ransom for you, there is a person indebted to you – or he thinks of himself to be indebted. He comes to me and asks about his responsibility. My opinion is that he should give in secret to me whatever he wants.

The Imam (as) said: Act according to your own opinion because your opinion is my opinion; and he who follows you has certainly followed me.²

According to his scientific method, it is not permissible to give fatwa without having the knowledge about what fatwa is being pronounced.

The reaction of Imam Jawad (as) against his uncle Abdullah bin Musa – which we have just read – was giving fatwas without having knowledge. When Imam Jawad (as) came to know about it, he said to him: There is no God but Him. It is very hard for you to be in the presence of Allah on the Day of Resurrection and hear Him say: 'Why did you give such fatwa about something which you did not know

1. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:53/hadith 15.

2. Rijal al-Kashi p. 610/hadith 1134. In this tradition, by saying "master" he meant either Imam Raza (as), Imam Jawad (as) or Imam Hadi (as), because he was the servant of three of them and it is also possible that he sent the money for three of them.

In this tradition, some other lines have also been included which say: Abu Umar said: "This matter [of asking for permission to act according to one's own opinion] shows that Khayran the servant was the administrator of the Imam (as). He has mentioned some traditions which belong to Imam Jawad (as) and Imam Raza (as). Refer to: Wasail al-Shi'a 12:216/hadith 6.

anything about while there existed, in the Ummah, one who was more aware than you?"¹

Imam Jawad's (as) Answers to Jurisprudential and Scientific Questions

Imam Jawad's (as) answers which he gave to jurisprudential and scientific questions played a vital role in strengthening the base of scientific structure of the pious group. A number of them are given below:

Hathis bin Hathin says: I wrote to Abu Ja'far (as): May I be ransom for you; your companions and followers have disagreed about the time of morning prayers. Some of them offer their prayer at the time of first fajr when the dawn is in a horizontal position while the second group offers their prayer only when the fajr becomes nearer to the earth and when the dawn is in a vertical position. I do not know which one is better and is more valuable. O my master, may I be ransom. It will be better if you make me know the best and virtuous time for the morning prayers; and [it will be very kind of you to make me aware about] the nights with full moon and the nights covered with clouds, how should I offer my prayer? Also, make the time for the morning prayers during a journey and when at home clearer for me.

Imam (as) wrote back to me in his own handwriting: May Allah bless you. Fajr is the time when a white line becomes clear but not so high. The time for offering prayers during journeys and when at rest is when you become sure about the dawn and the morning's appearance. [And you should know] may Allah bless you that Allah has not left His creatures doubt about this matter as He has said:

﴿وَكُلُوا وَاشْرَبُوا حَتَّىٰ يَتَبَيَّنَ لَكُمُ الْخَيْطُ الْأَبْيَضُ مِنَ الْخَيْطِ الْأَسْوَدِ مِنَ الْفَجْرِ﴾

*"And eat and drink until the white streak becomes manifest to you from the dark streak at the crack of dawn."*¹

1. Al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:100/hadith 12; 'Uyun al-Mua'ajizat p. 109.

Therefore, the crack of dawn is Fajr when eating and drinking becomes haram for those observing fast and it is the right time to offer the morning prayers."²

Reciting Basmalah during the Prayer

Yahya bin Abi Imran Hamdani narrated: I wrote a letter to Abu Ja'far (as): May I die for you, a person recited Basmalah during his prayer only for the al-Fatihah, not for the Surat following it. Abbasid³ has said: There is no harm in doing so. What do you say about this?

Imam (as) replied in his own writing: Despite what Abbasid has said, say Basmalah twice.⁴

Forced Marriage

Ali bin Mahziyar quotes Muhammad bin Hassan Ash'ari as saying: What do you say about a little girl whose uncle (father's brother) had married her (to someone) and when she became adult, she refused that marriage?

Imam (as) wrote saying: She is not to be forced to that and the matter is up to her.⁵

Endowment

Ali bin Muhammad bin Sulayman al-Nawfali narrated: I wrote to Abu Ja'far the second (as) asking him about the land which my father had entailed on the needy children of so-and-so who were too many and who lived in different places.

1. *Surat al-Baqarah*, 2:187.

2. Al-Tusi, *Tahdhib al-Ahkam* 2:36-37; *Muntaqa al-Jamman* 4:439.

3. He was Hisham bin Ibrahim Abbasid and was an opponent of Imam Reza (as) and Imam Jawad (as).

4. Al-Tusi, *Tahdhib al-Ahkam* 2:69/hadith 252; Al-Kulayni, *al-Kafi* 3:313/hadith 2.

5. Al-Kulayni, *al-Kafi* 5:394/hadith 17; Al-Tusi, *Tahdhib al-Ahkam* 7:386/hadith 1551.

He replied to me: It is for those who are present in the country where the entailment is and you do not have to follow after those who are absent.¹

The Witnessing of Spouse and Stranger

Muhammad bin Sulayman asked Imam Jawad (as) to explain how when a husband accused his wife of adultery his witness would be as four witnesses before Allah and when someone other than the husband accused the wife of that man whether he was one of her relatives or not, he would prove his accusation with clear evidence or otherwise he would undergo legal judgment by being whipped. Imam Jawad (as) said, "Abu Ja'far (Imam al-Baqir) was asked so and he said, 'When a husband accuses his wife of adultery and says that he has seen her (commit adultery) with his eyes, his witness will be as four witnesses before Allah and if he says that he has not seen her, he will be asked to prove his accusation by clear evidences; otherwise, he will be treated as others. It is so because a husband comes to his wife day and night in a way that neither her father nor her son does. It is possible for him to say that he has seen her (commit sin). But, if someone other than the husband says he has seen that wife (commit adultery), it will be said to him: what has made you be in the position where you alone could see her commit adultery? You are accused and you must undergo the legal punishment that Allah has determined on you.

Then he said: For the husband to bear witness it is necessary for him to swear to Allah four times as four witnesses; and each oath will be as one witness.²

What we just mentioned were some examples of Imam Jawad's (as) guidance which took place because of the letters written to him or because of the questions which were asked of him; the purpose

1. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 7:38/hadith 37; Al-Tusi, Tahdhib al-Ahkam 9:133/hadith 563.

2. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 7:403/hadith 6; Shaykh al-Saduq, 'Ilal al-Shara'i' 2:545/hadith 1.

behind all these was to enrich the Shia and his companions with the knowledge of religious matters.

C. Strengthening the Educational Structure

Nourishing the Islamic morals in the people and society was one of the most basic affairs towards which Imam Jawad (as) paid great attention. For training the Islamic nation, he narrated for his followers and the Islamic Ummah the Hadiths of his forefathers, especially the ones belonging to the Amir al-Mu'minin (as) which were filled with educational messages. In this article we will read about some of Imam Jawad's (as) own sayings along with what he mentioned from his forefathers (as) as the guiding principles for the Islamic nation.

Wisdom throughout Practice

Imam Jawad (as) wanted to bring awareness among the Shia regarding the necessity of wisdom in practical fields and observing the role of time in making the issues clear. According to him, all affairs needed to be made practical in appropriate times and underestimating this affair in any ways meant an incomplete affair. He said in this regard: To make something [program or plan] manifest before it becomes final and confirmed means its destruction [and failure].¹

In another guiding sentence, he reminds us that troubles and hardships are like an illness which has its own phases and cannot leave before these phases have been completed. Everyone is compelled to experience a phase and no one can reduce their time. Certainly, Imam (as) did not mean the people to leave their efforts against these hardships and to free themselves from these troubles; but what he meant was to plan something useful to reduce the period of the hardships or even remove them, if possible. When Qais bin Sa'ad arrived in the presence of Imam Jawad (as) from Egypt, Imam Jawad (as) said to him after quoting his grandfather Amir al-Mu'minin Ali (as): O Qays! The difficulties and hardships have an end which they are compelled to reach. Therefore, a wise [person]

1. Tuhaf al-Uqul p. 457.

should endure the difficulties and hardships unless they are gone; because any kind of quick planning will increase their severity."¹

Also, relating to the elements which lead the action of a man towards perfection, he quoted his grandfather Imam Ali (as) who had said: There are four things which help a man to face endurance: health, wealth, wisdom and opportune.²

Interaction with Cruel ones

Imam Jawad (as) insisted on the Muslims keeping away from oppressors and being united among themselves. He called on the Muslims to leave the oppressors. About being with the cruel ones or feeling any kind of inclination towards them, Imam Jawad (as) quoted a narration from Amir al-Mu'minin (as) who said: The cruel person, the person favouring a cruel person and the one who agrees with his cruelty are all partners in the cruel act.³

He also quoted the Commander of the faithful (as) as saying: He who considers a bad action a good and favourable one is a partner in that action.⁴

According to Imam Jawad (as) following the deviated ones is like listening to the words of Satan. Therefore, he insisted on refraining from following the deviated people. He said: He who listens to a caller is serving him. If the caller was God's representative, he is then serving God. If the caller was the Shaytan's representative, he is then serving Shaytan.⁵

For a complete nullification of the oppressors and to condemn their behaviour, Imam Jawad (as) mentioned the concept of religiousness

1. Al-Irbali, Kashf al-Ghummah 3:136; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 75:81/hadith 55-57.

2. Al-Irbali, Kashf al-Ghummah 3:136; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 75:81/hadith 55-57.

3. Al-Irbali, Kashf al-Ghummah 3:138; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 75:81/hadith 69.

4. Al-Irbali, Kashf al-Ghummah 3:139; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 75:82/hadith 79.

5. Tuhaf al-'Uqul p. 456; Mustadrak al-Wasail 17:308.

in the eyes of Allah – Who has mentioned it in the form of a Divine Hadith to one of His prophets (as) – saying: God revealed to one of His prophets: Your asceticism will give you comfort. Your devotion to Me will endear you to Me. But, did you antagonize My enemies and cherish My disciples?¹

According to this tradition, religiousness is proved only with the companionship of the divine guardians and by showing enmity towards the enemies of God; it is also proved by showing no feelings of respect for such people. For creating the spirit of fighting against cruel ones in the Muslims, Imam Jawad (as) quoted the Commander of the faithful Ali (as), which included the words he said to Abu Dharr Ghifari. In this narration, Imam Ali (as) said to Abu Dharr: O, Abu Dharr! You showed anger in the name of Allah therefore have hope in Him for whom you became angry. The people were afraid of you in the matter of their (pleasure of this) world while you feared for your faith.

By Allah even if these skies and earth were closed to some individual and he feared Allah, then Allah would open them for him. Only rightfulness should attract you while wrongfulness should detract you.²

Social Activities

The higher the social position of a man and the more his influence in society, the more activities are expected of him. With this in mind, Imam Jawad (as) made the leading faithful ones aware of the importance of their activities in society. We shall mention some of these activities here:

The more a person gains respect and achieves a high position in society, the higher people's expectations of him will be as they ask him to solve their problems. On this basis the narrations and traditions of the Household (as) are like a divine blessing which are provided to the people. Imam Jawad (as) quoted his grandfather, the Commander

1. Tuhaf al-'Uqul pp. 455-456; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 66:238/hadith 7.

2. Al-Irbali, Kashf al-Ghummah 3:136, al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 75:78/hadith 45.

of the Faithful (as), which was first narrated by his forefathers (as) in which the Commander of the Faithful (as) said: Whenever God's blessings increase towards a person, his responsibilities in removing the people's needs also become stronger and heavier. Therefore, whoever does not carry the burden of people's needs (and does not entrust the people with what Allah has given him), certainly he will spoil and destroy his (divine) blessings.¹

In the opinion of the Imams (as), the level of constancy and permanence of the blessings which Allah has given a person is related to the level of his services which he provides to the needy and the poor. Imam Jawad (as) quotes another narration which is related to the same concept. The Commander of the Faithful (as) said: There are the servants of Allah whom He has blessed with His blessings. As long as they keep bestowing it [in the way of Allah for removing the needs of the people], they will have these blessings; but when they stop giving them, Allah will take them back from them and give them to others.²

Also, he quoted the Commander of the Faithful Imam Ali (as) as saying: The righteous are in need of their good deeds more than the needy because their good deeds will bring them pride, reward and permanence of their name. Therefore, whenever a person does something good, he has started it in his own favour; that is why he does not need to ask other people for thanks.³

Thanking a person doing good is another thing which has been much insisted on by the Imams (as). Imam Jawad (as) quoted the Commander of the Faithful (as) in this regard, too, saying: Ingratitude for blessings summons unpleasantness and wrath; and he who thanks

1. Al-Irbali, *Kashf al-Ghummah* 3:137; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 75:79/hadith 59.

2. Al-Irbali, *Kashf al-Ghummah* 3:136; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 75:79/hadith 58.

3. Al-Irbali, *Kashf al-Ghummah* 3:137; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 75:79/hadith 60.

you for what he has taken from you in fact has given you more than what you have given to him."¹

Relation between the people of the society and friendly interaction among friends are among the social problems and Islamic thinking which were insisted on by Imam Jawad (as); and the Imam (as) made the people know about the ways and methods of how to achieve them. He quoted his grandfather the Commander of the Faithful (as): Love is gained through three qualities: justice in interaction, care in trouble and submitting to it and consulting the heart and thoughts.

The Imam (as) said of relations between friends and interaction between religious brothers:

Let doubts not corrupt you about the friendship of your friend whom you have chosen with complete belief. He who gives his religious brother advice in secret certainly has showed respect for him; but whoever gives his friends advice in the presence of other people, certainly he has flawed his friendship. The good people are brought on the right path by doing good, while the bad and wicked persons are brought on the right path by punishment. Death is the best protector. There is always a battle between reason and ignorance in every person till the age of eighteen. When the man reaches this age, the one with a higher level in him overcomes his life.

Whenever Allah the Honorable the High blesses someone with His blessings and the person thinks the blessings belong only to Allah, Allah will write a good deed in the book of his deeds before he thanks Allah for what He has given to him. And whenever a person commits a sin, but if he knows that Allah is well aware of his sin and He is the One who can punish him or forgive him for his evil deed, certainly Allah will forgive him before he regrets his wrong deed.²

Imam Jawad (as) also insisted on the necessity of choosing a pious companion for oneself, because companions are very influential and their company, whether good or bad, affects a person. He quoted the

1. Al-Irbali, *Kashf al-Ghummah* 3:139-140; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 75:82/hadith 80-77-81.

2. Ibid.

Commander of the Faithful (as) in this regard: Companionship with ignorant ones corrupts one's morals; and companionship of a pious person is the reason for goodness and good morals. The creatures of Allah are different and every person behaves according to his own qualities and specialties. People are each other's brothers. So the brotherhood of whosoever is for someone other than Allah, is the reason for enmity. Allah the Honorable, the High has said in this regard:

On that day some of the friends, except the pious ones, will be the enemies of some others.¹

Also he quoted the Commander of the Faithful (as) as saying: The holy Prophet (sawas) sent me to Yemen and, for an advice, said to me: O Ali, he who asks [Allah] for good will never go astray, and he who asks for other's advice will never regret it.

Also he said: He who finds a brother on the way to Allah and chooses him has certainly found a place in paradise.²

In this manner, Imam Jawad (as) mentioned all aspects of social life and the mutual duties of the people. With the help of spiritual examples, he mentioned that having sincere brothers who accept one's friendship only with divine attraction, is a great freedom and such brothers should be benefited from and they should be asked for advice and counsel.

Imam Jawad's (as) Advice

Imam Jawad (as) always wanted the faithful ones to have hope in their hearts so as to make them able to face and fight challenges. Imam (as) tells the people about the end of the story of the cruel ones mentioning how in the end they will be punished and the government will be handed over to the oppressed; this was something which transformed the oppressed into a great power.

1. Al-Irbali, Kashf al-Ghummah 3:142; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 75:82/hadith 81.

2. Al-Irbali, Kashf al-Ghummah 3:139; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 75:82/hadith 78.

Imam Jawad (as) also quoted his grandfather the Commander of the Faithful (as) in this regard saying: Judgment Day for the oppressors is harder than the day of cruelty and oppression for the oppressed.¹

He also said: Tolerance at the time of hardship by a faithful one is the most useful weapon against the cruel and oppressor.

He also said: Showing tolerance in the face of hardship is a great hardship for the tyrant and oppressor.²

By quoting his grandfather the Commander of the Faithful (as), Imam Jawad (as) showed the faithful the right path to achieve the great targets which every person has to seek in his life. He quoted the Commander of the Faithful (as) saying: He who believes in God, Allah also shows him the path of happiness. He who believes in Allah, will find Him enough in all his deeds. Believing in Allah is like a castle whose protection is only enjoyed by the faithful; and depending on Allah is the way to be rid of every evil and this stops every kind of enmity. Religiousness is honour, wisdom and treasure; and silence is a light; piety is the highest level of religiousness. Nothing can destroy religion more than innovation and nothing can destroy a person more than greed. With a guardian, the people become united and through prayer, calamities are removed. He who rides the horse of tolerance is victorious. In the case of one who backbites, someone else will come and will backbite him. He who abuses will be abused; and he who plants the plant of piety will soon receive its fruit.³

Encouraging Knowledge

By quoting his grandfather the Commander of the faithful (as) and by mentioning the greatness and the high position of the ulamas, Imam Jawad (as) called all the people towards knowledge and education and

1. Al-Irbali, Kashf al-Ghummah 3:135-136; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 75:78/hadith 50-51.

2. Al-Irbali, Kashf al-Ghummah 3:138; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 75:81/hadith 70.

3. Al-Irbali, Kashf al-Ghummah 3:139; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 75:81/hadith 73.

he encouraged them in this. What we shall read are some examples of what he said on the value of gaining knowledge:

The Commander of the faithful (as) said: Acquire knowledge, as acquiring knowledge is obligatory and searching for it is recommended. Knowledge is a sign of relation between the religious brothers, the sign of generosity, the present of gatherings and a good companion of exile.¹

Also he said: Knowledge is of two kinds: knowledge which has been developed inside men and the knowledge which has been heard and gained. If knowledge is not developed inside men and is only gained, it will be of no use. He who knows the value of knowledge cannot delay its increase. It is the beauty of speaking and the perfection of mind and reason.

He also quoted from the book of the Commander of the faithful (as): A human being can be compared to a weighing scale more than anything else whose pan becomes heavy with the help of knowledge and becomes light because of ignorance.²

Also he said: In case of doubt [in your mind], consult the ulamas who have the knowledge of brighter ways and strong documents. For he who goes astray on the way to reach the right ways, the remedies are of no use. A greedy person is always in wretchedness; and he who wants to live in this world forever must provide a very strong heart against adversity [for he will face difficulties at every step].³

Imam Muhammad Jawad (as) felt sorry for the spread of ignorance and the increase in ignorant people and the problems of the ulamas which they faced with them. According to Imam (as), the questions which were asked by the ignorant people not only put the ulamas in trouble but also caused disputes among the people. He quoted his

1. Al-Irbali, *Kashf al-Ghummah* 3:136; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 75:79/hadith 56.

2. Al-Irbali, *Kashf al-Ghummah* 3:137; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 75:80/hadith 63.

3. Al-Irbali, *Kashf al-Ghummah* 3:137; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 75:80/hadith 63.

grandfather the Commander of faithful (as) in this regard. Imam Ali (as) said: Because of the increase in ignorant people, the ulamas are alone and hopeless.¹

Also he quoted Imam Ali (as): If an ignorant person keeps silence [and does not raise questions based on his ignorance] the people will never disagree with each other.²

Encouraging Repentance

Among other important things which Imam Jawad (as) insisted on was the matter of repentance, returning to God and the ways and methods of how to repent. By quoting Imam Ali (as), he called the people to repentance. For example:

The Commander of the faithful (as) said: Repentance has four pillars: regret in the heart; asking for forgiveness on the tongue, physical practice and deciding not to return to sinning.

And three things take human beings to the willingness of God: Asking for forgiveness to a great degree, being kind and humble and giving much charity.³

He also insisted on the necessity of hastening to repentance and refraining from delay in this regard. He said: Delaying repentance is deceiving one's own self and delaying it for a long time is foolishness. Making pretexts against Allah is devastation and insisting on committing sins brings a feeling of safety against Allah's stratagem. Then he recited this holy verse:

1. Al-Irbali, *Kashf al-Ghummah* 3:136; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 75:78/hadith 53.

2. Al-Irbali, *Kashf al-Ghummah* 3:138-139; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 75:81/hadith 71,72,75,74.

3. Al-Irbali, *Kashf al-Ghummah* 3:141; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 75:81/hadith 74.

﴿فَلَا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ﴾¹

"Did they think they will remain safe against Allah's stratagem."²

3. Perfection of the pious group's structure and readying them for the period of occultation

We will mention this discourse in various paragraphs:

A. Establishment of Representatives and Taking Perfectly Measured Actions

The creation and then the organising of the pious group and putting forward their own activities through this group were among very important targets of the Imams (as). This purified family established the group of pious people for the first time during the time of Imam Ali (as) who continued their efforts to take this group to perfection till the time of Imam Hasan Askari (as) and Imam Mahdi (may Allah hasten his appearance). Also they continued to extend the boundaries of their activities. What made the completion and perfection of this structure necessary was the severe observation of the government and the keen eye which they had put on the activities of the Household (as). In such a time, the companions, reliable people and the students of the Imams (as) were tried wholeheartedly to attain some of the Imams' targets. On the other hand, the enhancement of the pious group and their gatherings throughout the Islamic world were great steps towards increasing the boundaries of their representatives.

It is necessary to keep in mind that the establishment of representative organizations and having some representatives themselves was known to be one of the necessities of the Imams' activities; and these were the men who had to provide the Imams (as) with their help in the case of developing relations with the Shi'ah and fixing their activities fast.

1. *Surat Al-A'araf*, 7:99.

2. *Tuhaf al-'Uqul* p. 456.

The observation of Imam al-Rida (as) and after him of Imam Jawad (as) had made the necessity of organization more important. Let us not forget that at that time Imam Jawad (as) was completely under observation and any kind of connection with his followers and the Shia needed great and minute planning.

After the rulers of his time accepted his Imamah and accepted him as the religious leader of Islamic Ummah – whose knowledge he gained from his father and forefathers (as) – the calculated actions and activities of Imam Jawad (as) appeared to be finished. However, research into Imam Jawad's (as) life clarifies and confirms great attention and firmness. In fact, Imam's (as) every action and activity was related to another action and was according to the time which mentioned the target of the Imam (as) in that particular field.

When we talk about the methods of activities in the eyes of Imam Jawad (as), his great attention to his activities and the way of developing relationships with representatives and the group of pious people also come to mind. To elucidate this statement we shall give some examples of his relations with his followers and others:

B. Secret Letter-writing

Certainly, Imam Jawad's (as) relations with his companions and followers remained constant. It was necessary that a part of Imam Jawad's (as) connection with his companions would remain secret, because there was a possibility that the name of the senders of the letters would become known. We can see that Imam Jawad (as) was under observation even in his own home by his wife Umm al-Fadhl. Another manner of Imam Jawad's (as) connection with his companions was that the letters which he got from his companions did not have any name and address on them; Imam Jawad (as) guessed them by his own method.

It does not seem impossible that there was a code between Imam (as) and the sender of the letter by which Imam (as) came to know who the sender was. However, this assumption becomes possible only if we do not say that Imam (as) knew the senders of the letters through

his divinely-given power and omniscience; because "if Imam (as) wants to know something, Allah will make him aware of that thing."¹

Abu Hashim Dawud bin Qasim Ja'fari says: "Once, I went to Abu Ja'far (as) and I had three charters with me that were not signed with any name. I was uncertain whose ones they were and so I was distressed. He (Abu Ja'far) took one of them and said: This is Raian bin Shabib's, and took another and said: This belongs to Muhammad bin Hamza", then he took the third one saying: "This is from so-and-so. I was astonished. He looked at me and smiled."²

According to what is mentioned in Mawsu'at al-Imam al-Jawad (as), 72 of his letters were mentioned."³

C. His Social Activities

Imam Jawad (as) did not leave society but he was always beside the people. He knew about their necessities and demands and felt them in his mind and heart. Certainly, this was also the part of life of other Imams (as) too. Following his father and forefathers (as), Imam Jawad (as) was not careless towards the needs and demands of society. Here we will mention a tradition which is the continuation of the above-mentioned one.

Abu Hashim says: Abu Ja'far (as) gave me a sack with three hundred dinars in it and ordered me to give it to one of his cousins. Then he said: He will say: Tell me about any trader who will buy something for me with this money. I took the sack of dinars to him and he said to me: O Abu Hashim! Tell me about any trader who will buy something for me with this money. And I did so.⁴

This story clearly mentions that Imam Jawad (as) was well aware of the people's needs and requirements and tried to improve them.

1. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:202

2. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:495/hadith 5; Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:293; al-Tusi, al-Thaqib fi'l-Manaqib p. 519.

3. Mawso'at al-Imam al-Jawad (as) 2:413-415.

4. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:495/hadith 5; Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:293; al-Tusi, al-Thaqib fi'l-Manaqib p. 519.

D. Training his Followers

Another important issue which Imam Jawad (as) handled himself was the training of the Shia on the basis of religious teachings. One such case was the training of the great famous poet Di'bil Khuza'i. Di'bil says: I arrived in the presence of Imam al-Rida (as). He ordered to give me some gift. I took the gift, but did not praise Allah for that. Imam (as) said to me: Why did you not praise Allah for it?

In later years, I arrived in the presence of Imam Jawad (as), he gave me some presents then as well. When I took them, I said: All praise belongs to Allah.

Abu Ja'far (as) said: Now you have been trained.¹

This and other similar stories show the great care and attention of Imam Jawad (as) towards his followers' cultural and spiritual perfection.

4. Making Grounds for Imam Hadi's (as) Early Imamah

Among the other responsibilities of the Imams (as) was to inform the people about the next Imam (as) to some extent and call them towards accepting his Imamah. Like his forefathers (as), Imam Jawad (as) also had this responsibility on his shoulders. Therefore, Imam Jawad (as) also mentioned the Imam (as) after him among the leading Shia and his followers calling them towards accepting his Imamah. Here we will cite some examples of how he mentioned the early Imamah of his son among his companions and followers:

Khairani whose father was one of the nearest persons of Imam Jawad (as) and because of the post Imam Jawad (as) had given to him, always remained with him, narrates: Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Isa Ash'ari – who was one of the greatest jurisprudents of his time and who was from Qum – came every morning to my father to ask about the condition of Imam Jawad (as) who was ill in those days. But whenever a messenger of Imam Jawad (as) came to meet my father

1. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:496/hadith 1; Madinah al-Ma'ajiz 7:308/hadith 2343; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:93/hadith 6.

and gave him the Imam's (as) messages, Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Isa would go outside and let my father talk to the messenger in secret, which shows the confidence of Imam Jawad (as) in him – my father.

One night the messenger of Imam Jawad (as) arrived. Ahmad bin Muhammad went out and my father also started talking with the messenger in secret. Ahmad bin Muhammad went far away and then returned back and stood at a certain place where he could listen to their discussion. At that time, the messenger of Imam Jawad (as) said to my father: Your master has sent regards to you and he has said: I am going on my journey to the next world; and after me my son Ali will be the next Imam. After me, he has the same rights over you, which I had after my father. Then the messenger left my father and went away. Ahmad bin Muhammad bin Isa came in and asked from my father: What did the messenger of Imam (as) tell you? My father replied: All is well. Ahmad bin Muhammad said: I heard what he said to you. Then he told my father everything he had heard. My father said to him: Allah the Exalted has made this work Haram for you, because He has said: Do not investigate, but now that you have heard our conversation, keep it with you as witness. Who knows some day we may need your testimony. But be aware and do not tell this news to anyone unless the right time comes.

The next day, my father wrote in black and white what he had heard from the messenger on ten pieces of paper and after having written it he put the papers into envelopes and sealed them. Then he gave the envelopes to ten Shia and told them: If I die before telling you anything about these letters, open them and act upon what has been written in there.

Khairani says: When Abu Ja'far Imam Jawad (as) was martyred, my father stayed at home and did not leave. The chiefs of the Imamiyyah caste gathered around Muhammad bin Faraj Rakhji and started discussing who would be the next Imam. Muhammad bin Faraj Rakhji wrote a letter to my father and said that the Shia chiefs had gathered around him and if he was not afraid that they would be known otherwise, he would bring all of them to my father's house. Therefore he asked my father to come to his house and join them.

My father mounted his horse and went towards them. There he found a group who had gathered around Muhammad bin Faraj. They said to

my father: What is your opinion about this matter? My father looked at those ten people to whom he had given the ten letters and said: Bring those letters. They brought the letters and broke their seals. My father said: What that has been written in these letters is the same thing about which I was ordered. Some of the people said: We were pleased to know if there is another witness except these letters and your sayings so that he also could confirm your statement.

My father told them: Allah the Exalted has already provided what you have demanded for. This person, Abu Ja'far Ash'ari is the witness that I have heard exactly the same thing which I have written down in these letters. He asked Abu Ja'far Ash'ari to witness what he had heard. At first Abu Ja'far refused to witness. When my father saw it, he challenged him for cursing each other (Mubahilah) and threatened him from Allah the Exalted. When Abu Ja'far saw the situation was so critical, he said: Yes, I have heard this with my ears. But I denied witnessing because I wanted the greatness of giving the good news about the next imam to be given to an Arab – because the father of Khairani was not Arab. It was then that every person who was present did not leave the gathering before confessing about the Imamah of Abu al-Hasan Imam Ali Hadi (as).¹

Ismail bin Mihran says: When Imam Jawad (as) was taken to Baghdad from Madinah for the first time, I said to him: I am afraid for you during this journey. If something happens to you, who will be the next Imam (as)?

Imam looked at me with a smile on his face and said: What you have thought about is not going to happen this year. But when Imam was (as) taken to Baghdad for the second time by Mu'tasim, I met him and asked: May I be ransom! Now that you are going, please us who will be the next Imam? I observed that Imam Jawad (as) started weeping. He wept so much that his beard and moustache became wet. Then he looked at me and said: This time you should be afraid for me.

1. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:324/hadith 2; Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:298-300.

Therefore, you should know that after me the Imamah will belong to my son Ali.¹

Muhammad ibn al-Husayn al-Wasiti is quoted as saying: I heard Ahmad ibn Abu Khalid, stating that he (The Imam (as)) had appointed him as witness to bear testimony to this documented will in the following words." Ahmad ibn abu Khalid, the slave of Abu Ja'far, bears testimony that Abu Ja'far, Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Musa ibn Ja'far ibn Muhammad ibn Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Ali ibn abu Talib (as) is asked to bear testimony. Testimony to the fact that he has appointed his son, Ali, the executor of his directive wills regarding himself and his sisters. He has placed the affairs of Musa in his charge until when he attains maturity. He has appointed 'Abdullah ibn al-Musawir as the overseer to his legacy, his estate, property, expenditures and slaves etc., until Ali ibn Muhammad reaches the age of maturity. At such time 'Abdullah ibn al-Musawir will transfer the overseeing position to him (Ali ibn Muhammad (as)). He thereafter will take charge of his own affairs and sisters'. The management of the affairs of Musa will also be left to him. Musa will take charge of his own affairs after the two (overseers) according to the conditions set forth by the father of the two of them in the matters of his charitable charities. This has been documented on Sunday 3rd Dhul-Hijjah, in the year two hundred twenty. Ahmad ibn Abu Khalid has transcribed his own testimony in his own hand. He has asked al-Hasan ibn Muhammad ibn 'Abdullah ibn al-Hasan ibn Ali ibn al-Husayn ibn Ali ibn abu Talib (as). He also known as al-Jawani has a testimony just like the testimony of Ahmad ibn Abi Khalid at the beginning of this document. He also has written his testimony in his own hand and the witness to bear testimony in the document is Nasr, the servant, and he has written his bearing testimony in his own hand.²

After mentioning the above three narrations, the late Tabari says: There are many traditions in this regard. However, the consensus of

1. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:323; Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:298; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:118/hadith 2.

2. Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:261; Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:121-122/hadith 4.

the Shia about his Imamah and the absence of the people thinking the Imamah to belong to someone other than him make us not consider the rest of the narrations. Because of the Imams' fear of their enemies and their dissimulation for keeping themselves safe from any kind of harm the Shia demanded their explicit texts in their own handwriting. As we mentioned before, the strongest reason for the presence of an Imam is the mind and reason. Another proof is the traditions which mention the Imams (as) to be from the offspring of Imam Husayn (as). The misleading and false ideologies of other castes are also another strong reason which insists on the presence of an Imam."¹

5. Imam Jawad (as) and the 12th Imam

The issue of the last Imam is the most important element in Islam. Not one person can be found among the true followers of the Prophet (sawas) and the Imams (as) who has not called people towards this fact.

Imam Jawad (as) also followed the same path regarding the messianic issue. He mentioned this problem among the Islamic Ummah to deepen this thought in their minds and hearts about the promised Mahdi (may Allah hasten his appearance). Here we will mention some of the traditions and narrations about the issue of Mahdi as stated by Imam Jawad (as):

Hazrat Abdul Adhim bin Abdullah Hasani said: I said to Muhammad bin Ali bin Musa (as): I hope that you are al-Qa'im of the holy Household (as) after whose appearance the earth is going to be filled with justice after it has been filled with oppression and injustice.

Imam (as) said: Every one of us is Qa'im (executor) of the orders of Allah the Almighty and a guide to the religion of Allah, but the Qa'im by whom Allah will purify the earth from the people of unbelief and atheism and who will fill the earth with justice and fairness is he whose birth will be unknown to people and who will disappear and it will be impermissible for people to call him by his name. His name and nickname are like those of the messenger of Allah (sawas). The

1. Al-Tabarsi, I'lam al-Wara bi-A'lam al-Huda 2:113.

earth will be submitted to him and every difficulty will be easy to him. His companions, who will be three hundred and thirteen men as the number of the men of Badr (313), will join him from the farthest parts of the world as Allah says:

﴿أَيْنَ مَا تَكُونُوا يَأْتِ بِكُمُ اللَّهُ جَمِيعًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ قَدِيرٌ﴾

*"Wherever you are, Allah will bring you all together; surely Allah has power over all things."*¹

When this number of loyal men will join him, Allah will make him appear. And when his other companions come together and *aqd* (based on ten thousand people) will be provided, he will rise with the permission of Allah and will kill the enemies of Allah in such a way that Allah will become happy."²

Abu Turab Abdullah Musa al-Riwani narrated: Abd al-Adhim Hasani bin Abdullah bin Ali bin al-Hasan bin Zayd bin al-Hasan bin Ali bin Abi Talib (as) said to us: I arrived in the presence of my Master Muhammad bin Ali bin Musa bin Ja'far bin Muhammad bin Ali bin al-Hussain bin Ali bin Abi Talib (as) and asked him about al-Qa'im whether he was al-Mahdi or another one. Before I uttered a word, he said, 'O Abul Qasim, al-Qa'im of us is al-Mahdi who must be awaited in his occultation and must be obeyed after his appearance. He is the third of my progeny. By Allah Who has sent Muhammad with prophethood and singled us out with Imamah, if there will be only one day in the world, Allah will prolong that day until al-Qa'im appears, to fill the earth with fairness and justice as it has been filled with injustice and oppression. Allah will prepare the affairs for him as He has prepared the affairs for Moses where he went to bring a fire and came back to be the prophet of his nation.' Imam al-Jawad (as) added, 'The best deed of our Shia is awaiting deliverance.'³

1. *Surat Al-Baqarah*, 2:148.

2. Al-Tabari, *Ehtijaj* 2:481-482; *Ikmal al-Din wa Tamam al-Ni'amah* pp. 377-378.

3. *Ikmal al-Din wa Tamam al-Ni'amah* pp. 377/hadith 1; *Kifaiat al-Athar* pp. 280-281; *Bihar al-Anwar* 51:156/hadith 1.

Hamdan bin Sulayman narrated that Saqr bin Abi Dulaf said: I heard of Abi Ja'far Muhammad bin Ali al-Rida (as) saying: The imam after me is my son Ali (as). His order is as my order, his saying is as my saying and obedience to him is as obedience to me. The Imam after him will be Hassan (as). His order will be his father's order, his saying will be his father's saying and obedience to him will be obedience to his father. Then Abu Ja'far (as) kept silence.

I asked: O son of the Prophet (sawas)! Who will be the Imam after Hassan (as)?

Abu Ja'far wept and said: "After Hasan his son, Qa'im, will be the Imam who is to be awaited.

I asked: O son of the Prophet saw (as)! Why is he called Qa'im?

He said: It is said because he will rise after his memories are gone from the minds of the people and after the people who have accepted his Imamah will leave thinking so.

I asked: Why is he called the awaited?

The Imam (as) said: Because he has a long occultation and the sincere people will wait for him to reappear. The doubtful ones will deny him and will laugh at his name or the news of his reappearance.

His occultation is not predictable and negates the timing fixed by some people. Those who want him to appear soon will be destroyed and those who will wait for him to appear will be rescued.¹

1. Ikmal al-Din wa Tamam al-Ni'amah p. 378/hadith 3; Kifaiat al-Athar p. 283; Bihar al-Anwar 51:30/hadith 4.

CHAPTER THREE

IMAM AL-JAWAD'S SCHOOL AND HERITAGE

Disciples of Imam al-Jawad

A large number of master scholars and transmitters of Prophetic traditions surrounded Imam al-Jawad with the intention of deriving from the knowledge he had inherited from his grandfather the Holy Prophet (sawas). They therefore wrote down his discourses and guidelines as well as his magnificent wisdoms and literary masterpieces.

Thanks to these master scholars, the precious heritage of Imam al-Jawad, which is considered one of the intellectual fortunes of Islam, was saved.

Motivated by their religious faith that united them in protecting the verbal traditions of the Holy Imams (as), the Imams' disciples worked painstakingly to record these traditions to which scholars of the Shia Muslim jurisprudence have been resorting in deducing religious laws from the sources of Islamic legislation. In fact, had it not been for these writings and records, the followers of the Ahl al-Bayt School would not have had such advanced and magnificent jurisprudence, the genuineness and profundity of which have been confirmed by all jurists and intellectuals not only in the Muslim world but also in the rest of the world.

It is an object of pride to know that the disciples of the Holy Imams (as) spared no efforts in keeping close to the Holy Imams (as) and recording their words and discourses under the most critical circumstances when the tyrannical Umayyad and Abbasid authorities were severe to the Holy Imams (as) and banned any association with them so that the masses would not act upon their guidance and follow them.

The ruling authorities imposed such intensive pressure upon the scholars and transmitters of the Holy Imams' traditions that these transmitters did not dare to mention the name of the Imam from

whom they reported openly; rather, they had to refer indirectly to him by mentioning one of his distinctive features or indirect epithets lest they suffer the death penalty or imprisonment at the hands of the ruling elite.

Because of the security siege that the Abbasid ruling authorities imposed on Imam al-Jawad (as), he instructed his disciples to undertake the tasks that were difficult for him and to move in the fields where it was impossible for him to move. Among the basic fields in which Imam al-Jawad (as) had clear-cut imprints were the movements of his disciples who followed his instructions, complied with his guidelines, and moved according to his commands.

The reason for our reference to Imam al-Jawad's disciples is their scientific and intellectual activities that embodied the tendencies of the attentive virtuous community that acted under the directions of the Imam (as).

Hereafter, we will refer to a number of disciples who acted as perfect examples of the activity and product of Imam al-Jawad's school:

1. A-Husayn ibn Sa'id al-Ahwazi: Also known as Ibn Hammad al-Ahwazi, Abu Sa'id is a trustworthy transmitter of traditions. He reported from Imam al-Rida, Imam al-Jawad, and Imam al-Hadi, as.¹

2. Al-Hasan ibn Sa'id al-Ahwazi: Al-Hasan, the brother of al-Husayn al-Ahwazi, was one of the disciples of Imam al-Rida and Imam al-Jawad.²

The two brothers al-Hasan and al-Husayn moved together with Imam al-Rida (as) and then with his son Imam al-Jawad (as). They also participated in compiling many books and played major roles in guiding a number of people to the true path of Islam. For instance, al-Hasan ibn Sa'id introduced Ishaq ibn Ibrahim al-Hudayni and then 'Ali ibn al-Raian to Imam al-Rida (as) and to the Ahl al-Bayt School.

1. 'Allamah al-Hilli, *Khulasat al-Aqwal* p. 114, No. 278; Abu-'Ali al-Ha'iri, *Muntaha al-Maqal* 3:40, No. 878.

2. Shaykh al-Tusi, *Kitab al-Rijal* p. 354, No. 5244, p. 374, No. 5538; al-Tafrashi, *Naqd al-Rijal* 2:27, No. 1279.

These two received the Ahl al-Bait's traditions from al-Hasan ibn Sa'id and thus learned masterfully the science of transmission of *hadith*. Similarly, 'Abdullah ibn Muhammad al-Hudayni and many others converted to Shia at the hands of al-Hasan ibn Sa'id and served this school loyally. Both al-Hasan and al-Husayn compiled many books. Al-Hasan al-Ahwazi, for instance, is reported to have compiled about fifty books.¹

Writing the biography of al-Husayn al-Ahwazi, Shaykh Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Tusi says, "Al-Husayn ibn Sa'id al-Ahwazi, the trustworthy, reported from al-Rida, Abu-Ja'far al-Jawad, and Abu al-Hasan al-Hadi. Although he was originally from al-Kufah, he moved along with his brother al-Hasan to al-Ahwaz and then to Qum where he lived with al-Hasan ibn Aban before he passed away there. He compiled thirty books, which are as follows:

1. *Kitab al-Wudu'* (Book of Ritual Ablution).
2. *Kitab al-Salah* (Book of Ritual Prayer).
3. *Kitab al-Zakah* (Book of Poor-Rate).
4. *Kitab al-Sawm* (Book of Fasting).
5. *Kitab al-Hajj* (Book of Ritual Pilgrimage).
6. *Kitab al-Nikah wa al-Talaq* (Book of Matrimony and Divorce).
7. *Kitab al-Wasaya* (Book of Laws of Wills).
8. *Kitab al-Fara'id* (Book of Shares of Inheritance).
9. *Kitab al-Tijarat* (Book of Laws of Trade).
10. *Kitab al-Ijarat* (Book of Laws of Rent).
11. *Kitab al-Shahadat* (Book of Laws of Testimony).
12. *Kitab al-Manaqib* (Book of Meritorious Excellencies).
13. *Kitab al-Ayman wal-Nudhur wal-Kaffarat* (Book of Laws of Oath, Vow, and Expiation).

1. Muhammad ibn 'Umar al-Kashi, *Ma'arif al-Rijal* p. 552/hadith 1041; 'Allamah al-Hilli, *Khulasat al-Aqwal* p. 99, No. 224.

14. *Kitab al-Bisharat* (Book of Good News).
15. *Kitab al-Hudud wa al-Diyat* (Book of Penal Laws and Blood-money).
16. *Kitab al-Zuhd* (Book of Asceticism).
17. *Kitab al-Ashribah* (Book of Laws of Drinks).
18. *Kitab al-Makasib* (Book of Laws of Earnings).
19. *Kitab al-Taqiiah* (Book of Pious Camouflage).
20. *Kitab al-Khumus* (Book of Laws of the One-Fifth Rate).
21. *Kitab al-Muruwwah wa al-Tajammul* (Book of Etiquette of Civility and Courtesy).
22. *Kitab al-Sayd wa al-Dhaba'ih* (Book of Laws of Hunting and Slaughtering Animals).
23. *Kitab al-Mathalib* (Book of Vices).
24. *Kitab al-Tafsir* (Book of Qur'anic Exegesis).
25. *Kitab al-Mu'min* (Book of Qualities of True Believers).
26. *Kitab al-Malahim* (Book of Prophesized Events).
27. *Kitab al-Mazar* (Book of Etiquette of Pilgrimage to Holy Shrines).
28. *Kitab al-Radd 'ala al-Ghaliyah* (Book of Refuting the Extremists).
29. *Kitab al-Du'a'* (Book of Supplications).
30. *Kitab al-Itq wa al-Tadbir* (Book of Laws of Manumission of Slaves).¹

3. Muhammad ibn Isma'il: Known as Ibn Buzaygh, Muhammad ibn Isma'il is considered by Shaykh al-Tusi to have been one of the

1. Shaykh al-Tusi, *al-Fihrist* p. 112 (Biography of al-Husayn ibn Sa'id, No. 230).

disciples of both Imam al-Rida and Imam al-Jawad.¹ In fact, with regard to his piety and religiousness, Ibn Buzaygh was one of the most virtuous disciples of the Holy Imams (as). A few lines about Ibn Buzaygh's affairs will be mentioned below:

A. With Imam al-Rida:

Ibn Buzaygh had a close association with Imam al-Rida (as) who had such great regard for him that when Ibn Buzaygh was once mentioned before him, the Imam (as) commented, "If there were only one like Ibn Buzaygh amongst you!"²

B. With Imam al-Jawad:

With Imam Muhammad al-Jawad (as) too, Ibn Buzaygh had a very close connection. He reported from the Imam some of his discourses concerning the religious laws. When he asked the Imam (as) to give him one of his garments so that he would use it as a shroud after his death, the Imam (as) did this and sent him one his garments.³

4. Ahmad ibn Abi-'Abdullah al-Barqi: His full name was Abu Ja'far ibn Muhammad ibn Khalid ibn 'Abd al-Rahman ibn Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Barqi. In his famous book of biography, Shaykh al-Tusi mentions this man twice; once under the name of Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Khalid al-Barqi as one of the disciples of Imam al-Jawad (as),⁴ and again as Ahmad ibn Abi-'Abdullah al-Barqi as one of the disciples of Imam al-Hadi (as).⁵

One of the everlasting traces of this eminent man of letters was his famous book *al-Mahasin*, which has always been a reference book for historiographers, geographers, and biographers, as well as *hadithists* (scholars of the Prophetic traditions). From *al-Mahasin*, we can realize the greatness, vast knowledge and experience of al-Barqi in

1. Rijal al-Tusi p. 364, No. 5393 (Companions of Imam al-Rida) p. 377, No. 5590 (Companions of Imam al-Jawad).

2. Rijal al-Najjashi p. 322, No. 893; Muhammad 'Ali al-Ardabili, Jami' al-Ruwat 2:69.

3. Rijal al-Kashi p. 564, No. 1065.

4. Rijal al-Tusi p. 373, No. 5521 (Companions of Imam al-Jawad).

5. Ibid p. 383, No. 5645 (Companions of Imam al-Hadi).

such fields of religious knowledge as reporting the traditions of the Holy Prophet and Imams. He was indeed one of the Shia master scholars.

5. 'Ali ibn Mahziyar: 'Ali ibn Mahziyar is regarded as one of the most brilliant disciples of Imam al-Jawad (as) and one of the most eminent scholars of his age in virtue and piety. Below, a few details of his biography are presented:

Conversion to Islam:

Before having been guided by God to Islam, 'Ali ibn Mahziyar was Christian. Once he converted to Islam, he showed exceptional loyalty to his faith.¹

Devotional Acts:

As for his devotion and religious observance, he was unmatched in obedience to Allah the Almighty and in piety. He attained the pinnacle in devotional acts. It is reported that at sunrise, 'Ali ibn Mahziyar prostrated himself before Allah the Almighty and he would not finish his prostration before he had prayed to God for one thousand of his brethren-in-faith the same as he prayed for himself. Due to such lengthy prostration, his forehead was like a camel's knee in hardness.²

Trustworthiness:

Biographers have unanimously agreed that 'Ali ibn Mahziyar was trustworthy in transmitting reports from the Holy Imams (as). In this regard, al-Najjashi says, "'Ali ibn Mahziyar was so trustworthy in transmitting reports that none could find any fault with him."³

1. Rijal al-Kashi pp. 548-549, No. 1038.

2. Ibid.

3. Rijal al-Najjashi p. 253, No. 664 (Biography of 'Ali ibn Mahziyar). See also Khulasat al-Aqwal by 'Allamah al-Hilli p. 175, No. 517 (Biography of 'Ali ibn Mahziyar) where the author, as well as other eminent scholars of biography, declares 'Ali ibn Mahziyar to be trustworthy and his reports to be authentic.

Compilations: Indicating his vast knowledge and the extent of his being well-informed, 'Ali ibn Mahziyar was the author of a large number of books, some of which are as follows:

1. *Kitab al-Wudu'* (Book of Ritual Ablution).
2. *Kitab al-Salah* (Book of Ritual Prayer).
3. *Kitab al-Zakah* (Book of Poor-Rate).
4. *Kitab al-Sawm* (Book of Fasting).
5. *Kitab al-Hajj* (Book of Ritual Pilgrimage).
6. *Kitab al-Talaq* (Book of Divorce).
7. *Kitab al-Hudud* (Book of the Religious Penal Laws).
8. *Kitab al-Diyat* (Book of Laws of Blood-Money).
9. *Kitab al-Tafsir* (Book of Qur'anic Exegesis).
10. *Kitab al-Fada'il* (Book of Virtues).
11. *Kitab al-'itq wa al-Tadbir* (Book of Laws of Manumission).
12. *Kitab al-Makasib* (Book of Laws of Earnings).
13. *Kitab al-Mathalib* (Book of Vices).
14. *Kitab al-Du'a'* (Book of Supplication).
15. *Kitab al-Tajammul wa al-Muruwwah* (Book of Etiquette of Courtesy and Civility).
16. *Kitab al-Mazar* (Book of Etiquette of Pilgrimage to Holy Shrines).
17. *Kitab al-Radd 'ala al-Ghaliyah* (Book of Refuting the Extremists).
18. *Kitab al-Wasaya* (Book of Laws of Wills).
19. *Kitab al-Mawarith* (Book of Laws of Inheritances).
20. *Kitab al-Khumus* (Book of Laws of the One-Fifth Rate).
21. *Kitab al-Shahadat* (Book of Laws of Testimony).
22. *Kitab al-Fada'il al-Mu'minin wa Birruhum* (Book of Virtues of the Believers and Piety to them).

23. *Kitab al-Malahim* (Book of Prophesized Events).
24. *Kitab al-Taqiyyah* (Book of Pious Camouflage).
25. *Kitab al-Sayd wa al-Dhaba'ih* (Book of Laws of Hunting and Slaughtering Animals).
26. *Kitab al-Zuhd* (Book of Asceticism).
27. *Kitab al-Ashribah* (Book of Laws of Drinks).
28. *Kitab al-Nudhur wa al-Ayman wa al-Kaffarat* (Book of Laws of Vow, Oath, and Expiations).
29. *Kitab al-Huruf* (Book of the Qur'anic Recitations).
30. *Kitab al-Qa'im* (Book of the Awaited Imam).
31. *Kitab al-Bisharat* (Book of Good News).
32. *Kitab al-Anbiya'* (Book of the Prophets).
33. *Kitab al-Nawadir* (Book of Odd Anecdotes).
34. *Rasa'il 'Ali ibn Asbat* (Epistles of 'Ali ibn Asbat).¹

These books comprise a variety of branches of jurisprudence, doctrine, exegesis of the Holy Qur'an, and ethics, although most of them deal with Muslim jurisprudence. However, they indicate that 'Ali ibn Mahziyar was one of the most eminent Muslim jurists.

Imam al-Jawad's Epistles to 'Ali ibn Mahziyar:

Imam Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Jawad (as) is reported to have sent a number of epistles to his disciple 'Ali ibn Mahziyar, which proved the close connection between the two as well as the high regard and standing of the latter with the Imam (as). One of these epistles reads as follows: "...I have received your letter and understood what you mentioned therein. In fact, your letter has filled me with delight. So, may Allah fill you with delight! I also pray God the Protector and

1. Rijal al-Najjashi p. 253, No. 664 (Biography of 'Ali ibn Mahziyar). A reference has also been made to these books by Shaykh al-Tusi in his book: al-Fihrist p. 152, No. 379 (Biography of 'Ali ibn Mahziyar), where the titles of the books are mentioned in brief.

Guardian to save you from the trickery of everyone who plots against you, if He so wishes."

This epistle shows that 'Ali ibn Mahziyar had given service to the Imam (as) that filled his heart with pleasure. In return for this service, the Imam (as) prayed to the Almighty to give abundant reward and incentive.

Another epistle reads as follows: "...Having received your letter, I understood what you mentioned therein with regard to these people of the city of Qum—may Allah release and relieve them. In fact, this news has gladdened me although you have always brought joy to me. May Allah please you by allowing you to Paradise, and may He be pleased with you due to my pleasure with you! I finally hope for amnesty and clemency of Allah, repeating these words: For us Allah suffices, and He is the best disposer of affairs."

According to this epistle, 'Ali ibn Mahziyar seemed to have saved the people of Qum from an ordeal that had afflicted them. This act of 'Ali ibn Mahziyar pleased the Imam (as) who prayed to the Almighty to grant him a place in Paradise.

Another epistle of Imam al-Jawad to 'Ali ibn Mahziyar reads, "... You may now return home. May Allah award you with the best abode in this world and the next world!"

In this epistle, Imam al-Jawad (as) ordered 'Ali ibn Mahziyar to return home after he had accomplished the mission with which he was charged.

Another epistle reads, "... I pray to Allah to save you from any evil that may lie before or behind you and to save you in all of your affairs. So, enjoy this good news, for I do pray to Allah to protect you and I beseeched Him to decide the best for you when He decided to postpone your date which was on Sunday; so, He decided it to be on Monday instead. May Allah be your companion on your journey, may He guard your family members during your absence, may He help you carry out your missions, and may you be saved by His omnipotence!"

On another occasion, 'Ali ibn Mahziyar wrote a letter to Imam al-Jawad (as), asking him to invoke God for more sustenance and

granting him permission to use the money that was in his custody. Replying to his letter, Imam al-Jawad (as) wrote the following: "May Allah grant expansive sustenance for you and for your family members and dependants whom you have mentioned. Moreover, you will have more than expansive sustenance with me for you, 'Ali. I now beseech Allah to make expansive sustenance and well-being join you during your journeys, to present well-being to you, and to cover you with it. Verily, He is responsive to prayers."

Thus, Imam al-Jawad (as) permitted 'Ali ibn Mahziyar to use the money he had in his custody and then prayed for him with the best prayer.

On another occasion too, 'Ali ibn Mahziyar sent a letter to Imam al-Jawad (as) asking him to pray to the Almighty for him. So, the Imam (as) replied, "... As for the prayer you have asked for, you have not yet known the actual standing that you enjoy with me. Many a time have I prayed to the Almighty for you, mentioning you by name and even lineage, not to mention the very great care, love, and recognition that I have for you. So, May Allah keep on providing you with these things, may He be pleased with you, may He make you attain the best of what you bear in your mind, and may He allow you a place in the most elevated places of Paradise, out of His mercy. He is verily responsive to prayers. May Allah protect and guard you and may He defend you against all evils, out of His mercy. This epistle has been written with my own hand."¹

These epistles of Imam al-Jawad (as) to 'Ali ibn Mahziyar give a brilliant portrait of the great standing and high regard that he had enjoyed in the sight of the Imam (as), proving that he was unmatched in piety and obedience to the Lord.

6. Safwan ibn Yahya: Safwan ibn Yahya, Abu Muhammad al-Bujali, the cloth merchant (*Baia' al-Sabiri*),² who was from Kufah city, was

1. These epistles of Imam al-Jawad ('a) which he wrote in reply to 'Ali ibn Mahziyar's letters are mentioned in Rijal al-Kashi p. 550-1, No. 1040.

2. Ascribed to a town in Persia called Sabur, the word Sabiri refers to the clothes that were brought from that town.

a trustworthy transmitter of the Holy Imams' traditions. His father reported traditions from Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq (as), while he reported from Imam al-Rida (as) with whom he enjoyed high standing. Al-Kashi enlists him with the disciples of Imam Musa al-Kazim (as), adding that he believed in the Imamah of Imam al-Rida and Imam al-Jawad (as) after he had abandoned *Waqifiyyah*, a faction that appeared after the martyrdom of Imam al-Kazim (as) and believed that Imamah was suspended (*waqf*) on him.

Safwan was distinctive in asceticism and devotional acts. The *Waqifiyyah* had given him a large amount of money. 'Abdullah ibn Jundub, 'Ali ibn al-Nu'man, and Safwan had covenanted that the alive among them would pray, fast, and pay the religious duties of the dead. So both 'Abdullah and 'Ali died before Safwan who, according to that covenant, kept on praying, fasting, and paying the *zakat* duty on their behalf. He therefore used to offer one hundred and fifty units of prayer each day, observe fasting three months every year, and pay the religious duty three times, once for himself and twice on behalf of his two friends. Besides, whenever he donated something, he would donate the same on their behalf.

One of our scholars reported that Safwan was asked by someone to carry two golden coins to his family in Kufah, but Safwan apologized saying, "My camels have been hired; so I must first of all obtain the permission of those who hired them."

Among all of his contemporaries, Safwan was the most pious and most observant of devotional acts.

According to our scholars, Safwan compiled thirty books; yet, eleven of these are now known, which are as follows:

1. *Kitab al-Wudu'* (Book of Ritual Ablution).
2. *Kitab al-Salah* (Book of Ritual Prayer).
3. *Kitab al-Hajj* (Book of Ritual Pilgrimage).
4. *Kitab al-Zakah* (Book of Poor-Rate).
5. *Kitab al-Nikah* (Book of Laws of Matrimony).
6. *Kitab al-Talaq* (Book of Divorce).
7. *Kitab al-Fara'id* (Book of Shares of Inheritance).

8. *Kitab al-Wasaya* (Book of Laws of Wills).

9. *Kitab al-Shira wa al-Bay'* (Book of Laws of Purchase and Vendition).

10. *Kitab al-Itq wa al-Tadbir* (Book of Laws of Manumission of Slaves).

11. *Kitab al-Bisharat wa al-Nawadir* (Book of Good News and Odd Anecdotes).

In AH 210, Safwan ibn Yahya passed away. May Allah have mercy upon him.¹

Having been informed of his passing away, Imam al-Jawad (as) prayed to the Almighty to show Safwan mercy, as he testified to his having been amongst the party of his Immaculate Fathers—as—the successful party of Allah.²

7. **'Abdullah ibn al-Salt:** 'Abdullah ibn al-Salt, Abu Talib al-Qummi was a manumitted servant of the Banu-Taym al-Lat ibn Taghlibah.

Hamdan ibn Ahmad al-Nahdi reported, saying: Abu-Talib al-Qummi reported to us, saying: I once wrote a letter to Abu-Ja'far the son of al-Rida, asking him to permit me to mourn for his father Abu al-Hasan (al-Rida). Replying, Abu-Ja'far (i.e. Imam al-Jawad) wrote, "You may mourn for me and for my father."³

8. **'Ali ibn Asbat:** 'Ali ibn Asbat ibn Salim al-Kindi, the merchant of Indian clothes (*Baia' al-Zatti*), was from al-Kufah city. Introducing him, al-Kashi states that he was following the faction of *Fatahiyyah*, but 'Ali ibn Mahziyar wrote a brief thesis refuting his faith:⁴ "As 'Ali ibn Asbat was following the *Fatahiyyah* faith, he exchanged correspondence with 'Ali ibn Mahziyar concerning this faith.

1. Rijal al-Najjashi pp. 197-198, No. 524 (Biography of Safwan ibn Yahya).

2. Rijal al-Kashi pp. 503-504, No. 967.

3. Rijal al-Kashi pp. 567-568, No. 1074; al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 14:598/S. 105/hadith 5.

4. Rijal al-Kashi p. 562, No. 1061.

However, when the two referred their disagreement to Abu-Ja'far al-Thani (Imam al-Jawad), 'Ali ibn Asbat renounced his faith.

However, 'Ali ibn Asbat had already reported from Imam al-Rida (as) and he was not only trustworthy but also one of the most trustworthy and honest transmitters of traditions. I therefore rely on his reports, which are numerous. He had also compiled many books, some of which are: (1) *Kitab al-Dala'il* (Book of Proofs), (2) *Kitab al-Tafsir* (Book of Qur'anic Exegesis), and (3) *Kitab al-Mazar* (Book of Pilgrimage to Holy Shrines), as well as a famous book on odd anecdotes."¹

9. Ibrahim ibn Abi-Mahmud al-Khurasani: According to al-Kashi, Ibrahim was one of the trustworthy transmitters who reported the traditions of Imam al-Jawad (as). He also reported from Imam Musa al-Kazim (as) and Imam 'Ali ibn Musa al-Rida (as).²

10. Ibrahim ibn Muhammad al-Hamdani: One of the lofty persons, Ibrahim reported from Imam al-Jawad, his father Imam al-Rida, and his son Imam al-Hadi (as).

11. Ahmad ibn Abi-Nasr al-Bizanti: Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Abi-Nasr al-Bizanti al-Kufi, the eminent, enjoyed great regard from Imam al-Jawad and Imam al-Rida (as).³

12. Ahmad ibn Mu'afi: Ahmad was one of the disciples of Imam al-Jawad (as).⁴

13. Ja'far ibn Muhammad ibn Yunus al-Ahwal: Ja'afar was a disciple of Imam al-Jawad and his son Imam al-Hadi (as).⁵

14. Al-Husayn ibn Bashshar al-Mada'ini: Al-Husayn was a disciple of Imam al-Jawad, his father, and his grandfather (as).⁶

1. Rijal al-Najjashi pp. 252-253, No. 663 (Biography of 'Ali ibn Asbat).

2. Rijal al-Kashi p. 567, No. 1072-1073.

3. Rijal al-Tusi p. 373, No. 5515, p. 384, No. 5637.

4. Ibid p. 373, No. 5518; 'Allamah al-Hilli, Khulasat al-Aqwal p. 61, No. 66.

5. Rijal al-Tusi p. 374, No. 5534, p. 384, No. 5660.

6. Ibid p. 334, No. 4976, p. 355, No. 5263, p. 375, No. 5546.

15. Al-Hakam ibn 'Alya' al-Asadi

Al-Hakam was one of Imam al-Jawad's disciples.¹

16. Hamzah ibn Ya'li al-Ash'ari

Known as Abu-Ya'li al-Qummi, Hamzah was a trustworthy and celebrated person. He reported from Imam al-Jawad (as) and his father Imam al-Rida (as).²

17. Dawud ibn al-Qasim

Dawud ibn al-Qasim ibn Ishaq ibn 'Abdullah ibn Ja'afar ibn Abi-Talib, known as Abu-Hashim al-Ja'fari, lived in Baghdad. He was such an eminent and trustworthy person that he had a high regard with the Holy Imams (as). He was also a disciple of Imam al-Jawad, as he reported from him, his son Imam al-Hadi, and his grandson Imam al-Hasan al-'Askari, as all.³

18. Salih ibn Muhammad al-Hamdani

Salih was a disciple of Imam al-Jawad and his son Imam al-Rida (as).⁴

19. 'Abd al-Jabbar ibn al-Mubarak al-Nahawandi

'Abd al-Jabbar was a disciple of Imam al-Jawad and his father Imam al-Rida (as).⁵

20. 'Abd al-'Azim al-Hasani

1. In his book Tahdhib al-Ahkam 4:137/hadith 385, Shaykh al-Tusi mentions a narration whose series of authority ends to al-Hakam ibn 'Alba' (but not 'Alya'). According to this narration, al-Hakam had a connection with Imam al-Jawad ('a). See also Abu-'Ali al-Ha'iri, Muntaha al-Maqal, 3:104, No. 974, where this disciple's name is written as al-Hakam ibn 'Alba', but not 'Alya'.

2. Rijal al-Najjashi p. 141, No. 366; 'Allamah al-Hilli, Khulasat al-Aqwal p. 121, No. 307.

3. 'Allamah al-Hilli, Khulasat al-Aqwal p. 142, No. 390.

4. Rijal al-Tusi p. 376, No. 5561, p. 377, No. 5579.

5. Ibid p. 360, No. 5625, p. 377, No. 5579.

‘Abd al-‘Azim ibn ‘Abdullah ibn ‘Ali ibn al-Hasan ibn Zayd ibn al-Hasan ibn ‘Ali ibn Abi-Talib, known as Abu'l-Qasim, the devout and pious, was one of the choicest disciples of Imam al-Jawad, Imam al-Hadi, and Imam al-‘Askari, as. Imam al-Hadi (as) declared that visiting the tomb of ‘Abd al-‘Azim is as rewarding as visiting the tomb of Imam al-Husayn (as).¹

21. ‘Uthman ibn Sa‘id al-‘Umari: Known as Abu-‘Amr, al-Samman, and al-Zaiat, ‘Uthman was a trustworthy and dignified disciple of Imam al-Jawad (as). He was a contemporary of Imam al-‘Askari and worked as a deputy of his.²

22. ‘Ali ibn Ja‘far: ‘Ali ibn Ja‘far ibn Muhammad ibn ‘Ali ibn al-Husayn was a pious, virtuous, and distinguished man of religion who reported frequently from the Holy Imams (as). He was a disciple of Imam al-Jawad after he had been a disciple of Imam al-Sadiq, Imam al-Kazim, and Imam al-Rida, as all.³

23. ‘Ali ibn Bilal al-Baghdadi: We know little of ‘Ali ibn Bilal other than that he was a disciple of Imam al-Jawad (as).⁴

24. Al-Fadl ibn Shadhan: Al-Fadl ibn Shadhan ibn al-Khalil, Abu-Muhammad al-Azdi al-Nayshaburi, was a trustworthy, lofty, and master scholar of jurisprudence and theology. Imam al-Hasan al-

1. Rijal al-Tusi p. 387, No. 5706, p. 401, No. 5875. However, Shaykh al-Tusi stated that ‘Abd al-‘Azim was a disciple of Imam al-Hadi and Imam al-‘Askari, but not Imam al-Jawad (‘a). As for ‘Allamah al-Hilli, in Khulasat al-Maqal 4:140-141, No. 1643, he enlists ‘Abd al-‘Azim with the disciples of Imam al-Jawad (‘a). Providing evidence, he quotes a narration from ‘Allamah al-Qahba’i’s Majma‘ al-Rijal.

2. ‘Allamah al-Hilli, Khulasat al-Aqwal p. 220, No. 729; Abu-‘Ali al-Ha’iri, Muntaha al-Maqal 4:295, No. 1885.

3. Rijal al-Kashi pp. 429-430/hadith 803-804; Khulasat al-Aqwal p. 175, No. 515; Muntaha al-Maqal 4:362-363, No. 1975.

4. Khulasat al-Aqwal p. 176, No. 521; Muntaha al-Maqal 4:357, No. 1970.

‘Askari invoked God's mercy upon him. He reported from Imam al-Jawad (as) and is said to have reported from Imam al-Rida (as).¹

25. Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Jabbar: Muhammad ibn ‘Abd al-Jabbar, also known as Ibn Abi'l-Sahban was from the city of Qum. He was a disciple of Imam al-Jawad, his son Imam al-Hadi, and his grandson Imam al-‘Askari, as.²

26. Muhammad ibn ‘«sa al-Ash‘ari: His full name was Abu-‘Ali Muhammad ibn ‘«sa ibn ‘Abdullah ibn Sa’d ibn Malik al-Ash‘ari, and he was known as the chief of the people of Qum (Shaykh al-Qummiyyin). He reported from Imam al-Jawad (as) and had heard directly from Imam al-Rida (as).³

27. Nuh ibn Shu‘ayb: Nuh ibn Shu‘ayb al-Baghdadi was a righteous and well-pleased master scholar of jurisprudence. He was also a disciple of Imam al-Jawad (as).⁴

28. Ya‘qub ibn Ishaq al-Sikkit: Famously known as Abu-Yusuf, Ya‘qub was a master lexicologist. He enjoyed a high regard with Imam al-Jawad (as) and his son Imam al-Hadi (as), as he was one of their elite disciples. He was martyred by al-Mutawakkil, the ‘Abbasid ruler, because of his loyalty to the Ahl al-Bait (as).⁵

29. Ya‘qub ibn Yazid: Ya‘qub ibn Yazid ibn Hammad al-Anbari, also known as Abu-Yusuf al-Katib, was a trustworthy and honest transmitter of traditions. He reported from Imam al-Jawad (as) and he was a disciple of his father Imam al-Rida (as).⁶

1. Rijal al-Najjashi pp. 306-307, No. 840; Khulasat al-Aqwal p. 229, No. 769; Muntaha al-Maqal 5:197, No. 2282.

2. Khulasat al-Aqwal p. 242, No. 824; Muntaha al-Maqal 6:86, No. 2690.

3. Khulasat al-Aqwal p. 257, No. 881; Muntaha al-Maqal 6:149, No. 2812.

4. Khulasat al-Aqwal p. 284, No. 1042; Muntaha al-Maqal 6:390, No. 3132.

5. Rijal al-Najjashi p. 449, No. 1214; Khulasat al-Aqwal p. 299, No. 111; Muntaha al-Maqal 7:61-62, No. 3272.

6. Khulasat al-Aqwal p. 298, No. 1107; Muntaha al-Maqal 7:70, No. 3282.

30. Abu al-Husayn ibn al-Hudayn al-Hudayni: Abu al-Husayn was a disciple of Imam al-Jawad and Imam al-Hadi, as.¹

Shaykh 'Azizullah al-'Atarudi, who compiled the traditions that were reported from Imam al-Jawad (as) in a book which he entitled: *Musnad al-Imam al-Jawad*, listed the names of one hundred and twenty-one reporters who transmitted the traditions of Imam al-Jawad (as), among whom were his disciples, deputies, and select persons who formed a large group of master jurisprudents, men and women of distinction from the descendants of Imam 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib, and poets who praised the Imam (as), as well as those who had the honour to serve him during the lifetime of his father, Imam al-Rida (as), and the time that followed.

As for Sayid Muhammad Kazim al-Qazwini, in his book: *al-Imam al-Jawad min al-Mahd ila al-Lahd* (Imam al-Jawad from Cradle to Grave), he mentions the names of two hundred and seventy-five men and women under the title: Disciples of Imam al-Jawad.

In fact, Imam al-Jawad (as) created a trend that included his disciples who were loyal to his mission and its goals and provided them for the community under a variety of titles, such as trustworthy transmitters of traditions, scholars of jurisprudence and theology, heralds of virtue and social reformation, and pioneers who led the movement of change in the midst of the declining conditions under which the Muslim community lived at that time.

By doing so, Imam al-Jawad (as) rendered a great service to Islam and its great all-comprehensive movement, sparing no efforts in achieving this goal despite the absence or deficiency of opportunities and available potential. Yet Imam al-Jawad (as) acted carefully and observed whatever was required by wisdom in order to challenge judiciously the great number of obstacles that were imposed on the Muslim community in these ages.

In spite of all these obstacles, Imam al-Jawad (as) was able to attain his goal through his disciples who worked actively and positively in

1. Khulasat al-Aqwal p. 300, No. 1121; Muntaha al-Maqal 7:160-1, No. 3516.

spreading virtue, truth, uprightness, and true guidance among people by means of their reports from the Holy Imams (as) as well as their guidelines and precious written heritage that they provided to the community.

The Heritage of Imam al-Jawad

Of the Holy Imams of the Ahl al-Bait (as), Imam al-Jawad lived the shortest, which was no more than twenty-five years. Nevertheless, if we compare the heritage that reached us from him with the political and social circumstances under which he and his partisans lived as well as the lifetimes of the Imams who lived before him, the average of which was twice the length of Imam al-Jawad's age, we learn that his heritage is rich and abundant in terms of variety and supremacy and the extent of the scientific level mentioned in the texts reported from him, and the significance that can be deduced from these texts. In fact, this significance is a glaring challenge if we keep in mind the fact that Imam al-Jawad (as) started to spread this scientific heritage from the first days of his blessed lifetime before he became Imam while he was less than ten years old.

Let us now refer to some aspects of Imam al-Jawad's heritage.

1. Qur'anic Exegesis

A. Dawud ibn Qasim al-Ja'fari is reported to have asked Abu-Ja'far al-Thani (i.e. Imam al-Jawad), "May Allah accept me as ransom for you! What is meant by *Samad*?"

Answering him, Imam al-Jawad (as) said, "*Samad* means the Lord who is sought under all conditions, be they simple or complicated."¹

B. Abu-Hashim al-Ja'fari is also reported to have said: When I once asked Abu-Ja'far al-Thani about the meaning of *Wahid*, he answered, "*Wahid* means the unanimity of all tongues in speaking of His Oneness, just as Allah the Almighty and All-majestic said, 'If you ask

1. Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:123/hadith1; Shaykh al-Saduq, al-Tawhid p. 93/hadith 8; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 3:220/hadith 8.

them who has created the heaven and the earth, they all say: It is Allah. (31:25)""¹

C. Ja'far ibn Muhammad al-Kufi is reported to have said: I asked Abu-Ja'far Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Rida (as), saying, "O son of Allah's Apostle! Why was the Holy Prophet called *ummi*? Was it because he was unlettered and could not write?"

Answering me, the Imam (as) said, "Liars indeed are those who claim so! May Allah's curse be upon them! How can that be accurate while Allah the All-blessed and All-exalted says in His Decisive Book: 'It is He who has sent amongst the *ummi* people (i.e. people of Umm al-Qura, Makkah) a messenger from among themselves, to rehearse to them His signs, to sanctify them, and to instruct them in scripture and wisdom, although they had been, before, in manifest error. (62/2)' Now, how can he instruct them about what he himself does not know? Nay! By Allah, the Apostle of Allah (sw) could read and write seventy-two (or seventy-three) languages. He was called the *ummi*, because he belonged to Makkah, which is Umm al-Qura. Referring to this fact, Allah the Almighty says in His book; 'we revealed to you an Arabic Qur'an that you may warn *Umm al-Qura* (i.e. the mother city) and those around it, (42/7)'." ²

It is noteworthy that Imam al-Jawad (as), through the models to which he referred in the previous narration, presented an applicable example of understanding the Qur'anic terms and concepts through the Qur'an itself—a method which is now known as explaining the Qur'an through the Qur'an.

In the previous narration, Imam al-Jawad (as) gave a new concept of the Arabic word *ummi*, which is in no violation of the fact that the Holy Prophet (sawas) did not learn reading and writing from a certain teacher; rather, his learning reading and writing without teachers is another miraculous point that may be added to the other miraculous

1. Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:118/hadith 12; Shaykh al-Saduq, al-Tawhid p. 83/hadith 2.

2. Shaykh al-Saduq, 'Ilal al-Shara'i' 1:124-5/hadith 1; Shaykh al-Mufid, al-Ikhtisas p. 263.

features of his blessed life. Of course, learning writing and reading without a teacher and being characterized by the highest levels of capability for learning are two overwhelming proofs of his exceptional connection with Allah the Almighty and All Knowing Who

﴿عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ﴾

*"Taught man that which man did not know."*¹

D. 'Amr ibn Abi al-Miqdam is reported as saying: Explaining this holy Qur'anic verse: "...and that they (i.e. women) will not disobey you in any just matter...", I heard Abu al-Hasan (Imam al-Rida) and Abu-Ja'far (Imam al-Jawad) saying: The Apostle of Allah (sawas) once said to Lady Fatimah (as), "When I die, do not scratch your face as an expression of grief for me, nor let your hair down, nor shout with an expression of woe and doom, nor hire a (professional) mourner to wail for me." After a while, he added, "This is the *just matter* meant by Allah the Almighty and All-majestic in this holy verse: '...and that they (i.e. women) will not disobey you in any just matter...'"²

E. Imam al-Jawad (as) is reported to have said: Allah the Almighty and All Majestic has said about the Grand Night (*laylat al-qadr*), 'In this night, every absolute command coming from us becomes distinguishable. (44:4)' this means that every absolute and strong command is revealed on this night. Absolute and strong command (*muhkam*) are not two things. It is only one thing. Whoever judges without disharmony and differences, his judgment is part of the judgment of Allah the Almighty and All-majestic. Whoever judges in a disharmonious manner with differences and considers it the rightful way of judging, has in fact judged with the judgment of the devil. It is certain that on the Grand Night, the explanation and clarification of all issues of the year are revealed to the person who possesses Divine

1. This is an indication of the *Surat Al-'Alaq*, 96:5.

2. Shaykh al-Saduq, *Ma'ani al-Akhbar* p. 390/hadith 33; al-Hurr al-'Amili, *Wasa'il al-Shi'ah* 3:272-273/hadith 5.

Authority. On that Night, the person who possesses Divine Authority receives commands about himself, for so-and-so, and about the affairs of the people in such-and-such a place. It is also certain that for the man with Divine Authority, besides this, the knowledge of Allah the Almighty and All-majestic is revealed. The exclusive, the hidden, the wonderful, and the treasured knowledge of Allah comes to him every day just as it comes on the Grand Night in the form of commands.

Confirming these words with a Qur'anic text, Imam al-Jawad (as) recited the following holy verse: "If all trees on the earth were pens, and the ocean, with seven more oceans, were ink, still these could not suffice to record all the Words of Allah. Allah is Majestic and All Wise, (31:27)."¹

2. Discourses of Imam al-Jawad's (as) Theology

A. Duty of Protecting the Faith

Imam al-Hasan al-'Askari (as) is reported to have quoted his father Imam al-Jawad (as) as saying, "As for those who take upon themselves providing for the orphans from among the descendants of the Holy Prophet (sawas) who are separated from their Imam, who are perplexed in ignorance, and who are (doctrinally) detained by the devils and our enemies who openly incur our animosity; and so they save these orphans from these enemies, release them from their perplexity, overpower the devils by refuting their evil aspirations (that they cast at these orphans), and overpower our enemies by means of facing them with arguments from the Lord and with reasonable proofs from the Imams, these people will most surely be preferred to the worshippers just like the preference of the heavens to the earth and the preference of the divine throne, divine chair, and divine curtains to the heavens. Moreover, their preference to the other servants of Allah is the same as the preference of the full moon to the faintest star in the sky."²

1. Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:248/hadith 3.

2. Tafsir al-Imam al-'Askari p. 344/hadith 224; al-Tabarsi, al-Ihtijaj 1:14-15/hadith 10; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 2:6/hadith 11.

B. Belief in Allah's Unity

Abu-Dawud ibn al-Qasim al-Ja'fari is reported to have asked Imam al-Jawad (as) about the meaning of the word *ahad* mentioned in this holy Qur'anic verse: "*qul huwa allahu ahad* (Say: He, Allah, is One.)"

Answering him, Imam al-Jawad (as) said, "The *ahad* is the One about whose oneness there is consensus. Have you not heard Him saying, 'If indeed you ask them who has created the heavens and the earth and subjected the sun and the moon (to his law), they will certainly reply: Allah. (29/61)' Nevertheless, they then say that He has a partner and a wife!"

The reporter further asked, "What is the meaning of His saying: 'No vision can grasp Him, (6/103).'"

The Imam (as) answered, "Abu Hashim, listen. The illusions of heart are most surely more precise than visions of eyes. Through your illusion, you may grasp countries like Sind and India as well as others that you have not visited. Yet, you cannot grasp so with your sight. As long as the illusions of hearts cannot grasp Him, how can visions?"¹

C. Prophecy of the prophets

Al-Hasan ibn 'Abbas ibn Huraysh is reported to have quoted Imam al-Jawad (as) as saying: The Apostle of Allah (sawas) said, "Verily, our souls meet the souls of the prophets at the Divine Throne every Thursday night. So, the knowledge of the successors (of the prophets; i.e. the Holy Imams) increase greatly every Friday."²

D. Imamah

Imam al-Jawad (as) is reported to have said: Imam 'Ali Amir al-Mu'minin (as) once said to Ibn 'Abbas, "On the Grand Night, which occurs every year, all the affairs of that year are revealed to the Holy

1. Al-Tabarsi, al-Ihtijaj 2:456-6/hadith 319; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 3:208/hadith 3.

2. Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Saffar, Basa'ir al-Darajat p. 152/hadith 7; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 17:152/hadith 54.

Prophet (sawas) and this will not cease to continue after his passing away; rather, it will continue by revealing these affairs to his representatives."

Ibn 'Abbas asked, "Who are these representatives?"

Imam 'Ali (as) answered, "They are I and eleven persons from my offspring. They are Imams and they are spoken to by the angels."¹

E. Abu Hashim al-Ja'fari reported: I asked Imam al-Jawad (as) whether Allah might apply *bada'*² even to inevitable events.

"Yes, He may," answered Imam al-Jawad (as).

"So," we said, "we fear lest He will apply it to the advent of the Rising Imam (al-Mahdi)!"

Answering, the Imam (as) said, "The advent of the Rising Imam is a promise of Allah; and Allah never breaks His promises."³

F. Banan ibn Nafi' reported Imam al-Jawad (as) as saying: We, the Imams, can hear sounds from the wombs of our mothers only after forty days of the pregnancy. When four months pass, Allah the All Exalted will remove the heights on the earth for us and the remotest thing will be made nigh to us so that nothing at all will be hidden from us, even the drops of rain, be they useful or harmful.⁴

G. 'Amr ibn al-Faraj al-Rukhji is reported to have said that Imam al-Jawad (as) and he were on the bank of the River Tigris when he asked the Imam (as), "Your partisans (*sh'a*) claim that you have full

1. Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:532-3/hadith 11; Shaykh al-Mufid, Kitab al-Irshad 2:346; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 94:15/hadith 25.

2. Although *bada'*, a concept believed mainly by the Shia Muslims about the predetermination of Allah the Almighty, may seem to mean changeability in the divine determination, it actually means that the divine determination about a certain person may be conditional upon certain affairs.

3. Al-Nu'mani, Kitab al-Ghaybah p. 303/hadith 10; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 52:250-251/hadith 38.

4. Ibn Shahr'ashub, Manaqib al-Abi-Talib 4:388; al-Bahrani, Madinat al-Ma'ajiz 7/384/hadith 2392; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:56/hadith 34.

knowledge with every drop of the water of the Tigris as well as the weight of it. Is this true?"

The Imam (as) answered, "Does Allah the All Exalted have power to endow a mosquito that He created with the knowledge of these things?"

"Yes, He does." answered I.

The Imam (as) commented, "So, I am more honourable in the sight of Allah the Almighty than a mosquito as well as many of His creatures."¹

3. Imam al-Jawad and Jurisprudence

A. Abu Khaddash al-Mihri reported that he was present when Imam al-Rida (as) received a man who asked him three questions, all of which were completely answered by the Imam. Shortly after that, Abu Khaddash visited Imam al-Jawad (as) and posed the same questions to the Imam (as) who gave the same answers that his father had given. "May Allah accept me as ransom for you," said Abu Khaddash. "A bondmaid of mine who is the mother of one of my children breastfed one of my bondmaids with the milk with which she usually feeds my son. Is it now unlawful for me to marry that bondmaid?"

The Imam (as) answered, "The laws of breastfeeding are not applied when it is applied after weaning."

"How is the ritual prayer performed in the two holy precincts (i.e. Makkah and al-Madinah)?" asked Abu Khaddash.

The Imam answered, "You may perform them in the shortened form or in the complete," answered the Imam (as).

"Is it lawful for servants to enter the women?" asked Abu Khaddash.

1. Husayn ibn 'Abd al-Wahhab, 'Uyun al-Mu'jizat p. 127; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 50:100/hadith 12.

The Imam (as) turned his face away as a sign of displeasure. Yet, he then asked al-Khaddash to come near him and he whispered in his ear, "What does a servant need of a woman more than copulation!"¹

B. 'Ali ibn Mahziyar reported that he wrote the following in a letter that he sent to Abu Ja'far Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn Musa al-Rida (as): "May Allah accept me as ransom for you! I follow in congregational prayers an imam who believes in *tajsim* (corporealism: the belief that Allah is material and has a body) and another imam who follows the faith of Yunus ibn 'Abd al-Rahman."

The Imam's reply came as follows: Do not follow such people in prayers and do not give them any share of the *zakat* money; rather, you must clear yourselves from them. Allah is free from any obligation towards such people.²

C. Imam al-Jawad (as) was asked whether sailors on ships should perform their prayers in the shortened form. He answered: No, they should not, because the ships are their homes, since they cannot leave them.³

D. Salih ibn Muhammad ibn Sahl, Imam al-Jawad's deputy on the charity endowments of Qum, visited the Imam (as) and asked him to write off an amount of ten thousand that he had spent without obtaining the Imam's permission. "You are allowed with regard to that amount," said the Imam (as). However, when Salih left, the Imam (as) commented: They allowed themselves to misappropriate the property that is due to the descendants of Muhammad the Prophet (sawas); the orphans, the destitute, the needy and the wayfarers amongst them and then came to us, asking to forgive them and write off what they misappropriated! Did they even think that I would not

1. Al-Mas'udi, *Ithbat al-Wasiiyah* p. 188; al-Tabari, *Dala'il al-Imamah* p. 391/hadith 344.

2. Shaykh al-Saduq, *al-Amali* p. 352 /hadith 422; al-Hurr al-'Amili, *Wasa'il al-Shi'ah* 8:312/hadith 1.

3. Ibn Hamzah al-Tusi, *al-Thaqib fi'l-Manaqib* p. 523/hadith 458; al-Bahrani, *Madinat al-Ma'ajiz* 7:397/hadith 2405.

forgive them? Nay! By Allah, He shall interrogate them about this money extensively on the Resurrection Day.¹

E. 'Ali ibn Mahziyar is reported to have asked Imam al-Jawad (as) to explain to him the following holy Qur'anic verses and their like: "I swear by the night when it draws a veil, and the day when it shines in brightness, (92/1-2)" and "I swear by the star when it goes down. (53/1)"

Imam al-Jawad (as) explained: Allah the Almighty and All-majestic may swear by any of His creatures that He wishes, but it is not becoming for His creatures to swear by anything except Him.²

F. Imam al-Jawad (as) is reported to have said: When two men are equal in nobility and religiousness, the more eloquent of them will be the more preferred in the sight of Allah the Almighty and All-majestic.

When he was asked for the reason of such preference in the sight of Allah, the Imam (as) explained: This is because the more eloquent man can read the Qur'an as exactly as it was revealed and can pray to Allah without making any (grammatical) mistakes. In fact, prayers that are uttered with (grammatical) mistakes are not elevated to Allah the Almighty.³

4. Imam al-Jawad and History

A. 'Allamah al-Majlisi reports Shaykh al-Saduq who, through his chain of authority, quotes 'Abd al-'Azim al-Hasani as saying: I wrote a letter to Abu Ja'far al-Thani (Imam al-Jawad), asking him about Dhu'l-Kifl; his name and whether he was a messenger of Allah or only a prophet. The Imam (as) wrote back the following:

1. Shaykh Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 1:548/hadith 27; Shaykh al-Tusi, Tahdhib al-Ahkam 4:140/hadith 397; al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 9:538/hadith

2. Shaykh Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi:449/hadith 1; Shaykh al-Tusi, Tahdhib al-Ahkam 8:277/hadith 1009; al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 22:343.

3. Ibn Fahad al-Hilli, 'Uddat al-Da'i p. 18; al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 17:327/hadith 5.

Allah the Almighty sent one hundred and twenty-four thousand prophets, out of whom three hundred and thirteen were messengers. Dhu'l-Kifl was one of these messengers, may Allah's blessings be upon them all. He lived after the prophet Solomon the son of David. Like the prophet David, Dhu'l-Kifl was a judge who used to pass judgments among people. He was never angry except when the matter was related to Allah the Almighty. His real name was 'Uwayda. Allah the Almighty has made mention of him in His book where He says, "And make mention of Ishmael and Elisha and Dhu'l-Kifl. All are of the chosen ones. (38/48)"¹

B. Al-Mas'udi reported Imam Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Jawad (as) to have quoted his fathers as relating the following story:

One day, Imam 'Ali Amir al-Mu'minin, accompanied by his son Imam al-Hasan and Salman al-Farsi, entered the mosque. Once he sat there, people gathered around him. Immediately, a good-looking and well-dressed man came towards him, offered salutation, and sat. "O Amir al-Mu'minin," he said. "I am here to ask you about three matters; if you answer me the true answer, I will come to know for sure that you are the true successor of the Apostle of Allah, but if you fail to answer, then you are not different from the others."

"Ask whatever you wish," answered Imam 'Ali (as).

The man started, "Tell me where the soul goes when one sleeps, how one can remember and forget, and how one can resemble one's paternal or maternal uncles."

Turning his face towards his son, Imam 'Ali (as) asked, "Abu-Muhammad, you may answer him."

Answering these questions, Imam al-Hasan (as) said, "As for the first question, when one sleeps, his soul is hung to the wind, which is in turn still hung to the air until one moves to wake up. If Allah permits the soul to return to the body, the soul attracts the wind and the wind attracts the air, allowing the soul to return to its place in the body. But

1. Al-Rawandi, Qasas al-Anbiya' p. 215/hadith 278; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 13:405/hadith 2.

if Allah does not permit the soul to return to its holder, then the air attracts the wind, which attracts the soul, preventing it from joining the body of its holder until Allah the All-exalted resurrects the body.

As for remembering and forgetting, one's heart is put in a hollow that is covered by a sort of cover. If one forgets something but he says the Name of Allah, mentions Him, and invokes His blessings upon the Holy Prophet and his Household, the cover, which is like haze that overcast that hollow, is revealed, causing the heart to light up and allowing that person to remember what he had forgotten. However, when the person mentions Allah but fails to invoke His blessings upon the Prophet and his Household, that haze shuts the hollow, causing the heart to be dark and the man to forget what he has remembered.

As for resembling paternal or maternal uncles, when a husband copulates with his wife with a calm heart, peaceful veins, and undisturbed organs, his semen settles in the centre of the womb and the result will be a foetus that resembles his father and mother. But if the husband copulates with his wife otherwise, the semen runs in disorder and falls on certain veins. If it falls on one of the veins that carry the qualities of the paternal uncles, the foetus will resemble those paternal uncles, and if it falls on a vein inherited from the maternal uncles, the foetus will resemble those maternal uncles."

Having heard these answers, the man expressed, "I bear witness—and I have always borne witness—that there is no god but Allah, and I bear witness—and I have always borne witness—that Muhammad is the apostle of Allah, and I bear witness that you are the Apostle's successor, trustee, and assumer of his arguments."

Referring to Imam 'Ali (as), the man continued, "And I bear witness that you are the Apostle's successor and assumer of his arguments."

Returning to Imam al-Hasan (as), the man went on, "And I bear witness that your brother al-Husayn is your father's and your successor and the assumer of his argument after you. I bear witness that 'Ali ibn al-Husayn is the successor of al-Husayn, Muhammad ibn 'Ali the successor of 'Ali ibn al-Husayn, Ja'far ibn Muhammad the assumer of Allah's command and His argument-person after his father, Musa ibn Ja'far the assumer of Allah's command after his

father Ja'far, 'Ali ibn Musa the assumer of Allah's command after his father, Muhammad ibn 'Ali the assumer of Allah's command after his father, 'Ali ibn Muhammad the assumer of Allah's command after his father Muhammad ibn 'Ali, al-Hasan ibn 'Ali the assumer of the position of his father 'Ali ibn Muhammad, and finally I bear witness that a man from the descendants of al-Husayn ibn 'Ali, whose name must not be mentioned; rather, he can be mentioned by his epithet (*kunyah*) until Allah allows to make prevalent his affair so that he will fill the earth with justice and equality after it will have been filled with injustice. Finally, peace and Allah's mercy and blessings be upon you, O Amir al-Mu'minin."

Once the man had finished speaking, he left.

"Abu-Muhammad," Imam 'Ali (as) asked his son. "Follow that man and see where he is determined to go."

Carrying out his father's command, Imam al-Hasan (as) went out, but once he set foot out of the mosque, he did not understand where the man had gone. He returned to his father and informed him of what had just happened.

"Do you know who that man was?" asked Imam 'Ali (as).

"Allah, His Apostle, and Amir al-Mu'minin know best," answered Imam al-Hasan (as).

"That man was al-Khidr," stated Imam 'Ali (as).¹

C. Abu-Ja'far al-Mashhadi reported Imam al-Jawad (as) as relating that one day, the Holy Prophet (sawas) sent Salman to Lady Fatimah's house for something. Relating the story, Salman said: I stopped at the door for a while and then I raised my voice with salutation. I could hear Fatimah reciting the Holy Qur'an quietly while the quern was rotating and grinding wheat but there was nobody there except her. Upon hearing this, I returned to the Apostle of Allah (sawas) and told him what I had heard. He smiled and said, "Salman! As for my daughter Fatimah, Allah the Almighty has filled her heart and organs with faith and certitude; she therefore devoted herself to acts of

1. Al-Mas'udi, *Ithbat al-Wasiah* pp. 136-138.

obedience to Him. In return, He ordered an angel, whose name is Rawfa'il (or *Rahmah*, according to another version of this narration), to rotate the quern on behalf of her. Thus has Allah provided her with provisions in this world and in the next world."¹

D. Abu-Nu'aym al-Hafiz reported from Ahmad ibn Ishaq from Ibrahim ibn Na'ilah who reported Ja'afar ibn Muhammad ibn Mazid as saying: I was in Baghdad when Muhammad ibn Mandah ibn Mihrbazdh suggested, "Would you mind if I let you visit the son of al-Rida?" "Of course not," I answered. So, once we visited the son of al-Rida (as), we saluted him and sat down. Muhammad asked him about the tradition of the Holy Prophet (sawas) that reads, "Fatimah guarded her chastity; therefore, Allah forbade hellfire to consume her offspring." Commenting on this tradition, he (i.e. Imam al-Jawad) said, "This tradition is exclusive to al-Hasan and al-Husayn, may Allah be pleased with them."²

E. Through his chain of authority, Shaykh al-Saduq reported 'Ali ibn Ibrahim ibn Hashim, from his father, from Ahmad ibn Muhammad ibn Abi-Nasr al-Bizanti who said: I said to Abu-Ja'afar Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn Musa, "Some of your dissidents claim that it was al-Ma'mun who gave your father the name of *Rida* (the pleased), because he accepted him as his heir apparent."

He answered, "Liars and indecent are these people! It was Allah the All Blessed and All Exalted who gave the name of *Rida* to my father, because my father is pleased by Allah the Almighty and All Majestic in His heavens and pleased by His apostle and the Imams who came after him—blessings of Allah be upon them—on His lands."

I asked, "Is it not that each one of your forefathers was pleased by Allah, His apostle, and the Imams?"

"Yes, it is," answered the Imam (as).

1. Ibn Hamzah al-Tusi, *al-Thaqib fi'l-Manaqib* p. 290/hadith 248.

2. Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, *Tarikh Baghdad* 3:54/hadith 997; Ibn Khallakan, *Wafiat al-A'yan* 4:175, No. 561.

I further asked, "Then why was this name (*Rida*) given to your father exclusively?"

He answered, "This is so because my father was pleased and accepted by his enemies who were in disagreement with him in the same way as his partisans who were in accord with him accepted him. None of his forefathers had this characteristic before him. Therefore, he was give the name of *Rida* from amongst them."¹

5. Imam al-Jawad and Medicine

The Holy Imams (as) comprehended a great variety of sciences, including medicine and wisdom. This because Allah endued them with His favours, acquainted them with His unseen knowledge, conferred His light upon them, and inspired them with His knowledge, and also because they were the inheritors of the sciences of their grandfather, the seal of the prophets and the chief of the apostles; the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him and his household).

They sometimes used to heal the ailing with such various means like the Holy Qur'an, prayers, amulets, talismans and alms. At other times, they instructed the ailing to keep clean and pure and to practise public preventative health. At other times, they also prescribed certain herbs, plants, and other medical drugs which affectively contributed to healing these ailing persons, which indicates that the Holy Imams (as) were experienced in diagnosing diseases without resorting to laboratory tests, radiography, and similar modern medical technologies. It also indicates that they were fully acquainted with the specifications of these drugs and their direct influence on diseases, which proves the accuracy of their diagnoses of various diseases.

It is worth mentioning that modern medicine, making use of huge means, has just proven the accuracy of the treatments and diagnoses of diseases reported in the traditions of the Holy Imams (as) that trace back to many centuries ago. Moreover, a large number of physicians have depended on these traditions in treating many diseases. For

1. Shaykh al-Saduq, 'Ilal al-Shara'i' 1:236-237/hadith 1.

instance, cupping and phlebotomy have become both main and auxiliary treatments and the curative means of many diseases.

In their researches and studies, many western physicians and orientalists have testified to the truths comprised by the traditions reported from the Holy Imams (as), agreeing that the laws of medicine in totality have been summed up in one Qur'anic verse that reads, "Eat and drink: but waste not by excess, (7/31)."

The following few lines give an idea about cupping and phlebotomy:

Phlebotomy, which means to cut a vein, is the process of making an incision in a vein so as to drain out an amount of blood. In the present day, this process of bloodletting has reached perfection by using a wide-head needle so that blood is taken directly from the vein. The blood that is drained out through this process, which must take the shortest time possible, is usually from 300 to 500 cm³.

The difference between phlebotomy and cupping is that in the former, the blood of a vein is drained out whether it is pure or impure; while in cupping, only the impure blood is drained by creating local suction on the skin and applying heated cups to it the function of which is to absorb the fine veins and the blood capillaries that are disseminated in the flesh.

Another difference is that phlebotomy reduces the quantity of blood, creating a need for blood compensation and other matters that help create new blood, while cupping purifies and leaches blood without causing the body to lose a large quantity of it; rather, it mobilizes the blood circulation and creates general reactivity. So, unlike phlebotomy, cupping does not debilitate the body.

In the main, cupping is used for alleviating the blood circulation and releasing the body of the poisons of excrements, fat, and secretions. From ancient times, cupping had been practised as a seasonal duty and as a curative treatment of such diseases like thrombosis, heart failure, and anomalies of the encephalic arteries.

Concerning the importance of cupping, the Holy Prophet (sawas) is reported to have said, "I recommend you to practise cupping; lest your blood will overstep you and cause you death."¹

Galen, the famous Greek physician, said, "Your blood is your slave. Many times has it happened that a slave killed his master; so release it, but when it proves itself as obedient, only then may you keep it."²

Numerous traditions have been reported concerning the importance and curability of cupping.

Associated with cupping is the medicinal leech. The process of leeching stands for the application of a living leech to the skin in order to initiate blood flow or deplete blood from a localized area of the body. This worm, which lives in water and has the capability of absorbing blood, has proven its ability to treat many diseases of blood veins, because it enjoys a special ability to absorb the impure blood and let clear air penetrate under the skin during the process of absorption.

As for phlebotomy, it is the exclusive treatment for the following pathological cases:

1. Hypofunction of the left atrium, which leads to pneumonic swelling, causing dyspnoea (difficulty in breathing).
2. Cerebral high blood pressure, which is a result of thickness of the blood (hypercoagulability).
3. Increase in the number of the early erythrocytes.
4. Pneumonia (inflammation and consolidation of the lung tissue as a result of infection, inhalation of foreign particles, or irradiation).

Phlebotomy is practised on certain veins that have certain names, such as the *zahir* vein and the *akhil* vein. The Holy Prophet and Imams are reported to have specified certain times for practising phlebotomy.

1. Al-Bahrani, *Madinat al-Ma'ajiz* 7:388. A similar tradition is recorded by al-Suyuti in *al-Jami' al-Saghir* 1:70/hadith 442.

2. Al-Bahrani, *Madinat al-Ma'ajiz* 7:388.

As for cupping, it is practised on certain locations in the body, such as the fontanel (i.e. the crown of the head) and the upper back. According to traditions reported from the Holy Prophet and Imams, cupping should be practised at certain times, too.

Al-Husayn ibn Ahmad al-Taymi reported that Imam al-Jawad (as) called for a phlebotomist during the reign of al-Ma'mun, the 'Abbasid ruler, and asked him to practice phlebotomy on the *zahir* vein. "I have no idea where this vein is," expressed the phlebotomist, "nor have I ever heard of it.

So, Imam al-Jawad (as) showed him the location of that vein. As the phlebotomist started an incision, a yellowish liquid flowed so heavily from it that it filled a basin. The Imam (as) then instructed the phlebotomist to hold that place so that the yellowish liquid would be emptied from the basin. The same process was repeated and the same liquid flowed from that vein. When he had finished, Imam al-Jawad (as) asked him to tie his hand and gave him one hundred dinars (golden coins) as his wage.

Surprised by the situation, the phlebotomist received his wage and hurried to his master Yuhanna ibn Bakhtyashu' the physician,¹ relating the whole story to him.

The physician said, "I have never heard of such a vein since I studied medicine. However, we can ask so-and-so, the bishop, because he is too old to ignore such things. Otherwise, there is no-one else to resort to for this information."

1. Yuhanna ibn Bakhtyashu' was the personal physician of a brother of al-Mu'tamid, the 'Abbasid ruler. He was appointed as the bishop of al-Mawsil (Mosul, a province northern Iraq) in the year AH 279/ AD 893. In fact, this date is very far from the lifetime of Imam Muhammad al-Jawad (as) who was martyred in the year AH 220. However, it seems that there was a mistake in the name of the physician, and the intended one was Jabra'il ibn Bakhtyashu' ibn Jurjis, the special physician of al-Ma'mun, who died in AH 212 / AD 828. The Bakhtyashu' is a Nasturi Christian family who came from Nayshabur (northern Persia). They served the 'Abbasid rulers for about three centuries. The most famous members of this family are Jurjis ibn Jabra'il and Bakhtyashu' ibn Jabra'il.

They both visited the bishop and related the story to him. The man bowed his head, thinking about the matter, before he concluded, "That man must be a prophet or a descendant of a prophet."¹

According to *Rijal al-Kashi* (pp. 729, H. 804), 'Ali ibn Ja'far, Imam al-Rida's uncle who lived a very long life, said to Imam al-Jawad (as) when the physician was about to incise his vein (for phlebotomy), "My master, let the physician first incise my vein so that I will experience the sharpness of the knife before you do."

Treatment for tertian fever and quartan fever

1. Al-Hasan ibn Shadhan reported Imam al-Jawad (as) to have quoted his father, who was asked for a treatment for tertian fever ² and quartan fever, as saying, "Honey is mixed with black cumin and three spoonfuls of the mixture are licked. This prescription cures fever. These two (i.e. honey and black cumin) are the two blessed things. About honey, Allah the Almighty says, 'There issues from within their bodies a drink of varying colours, wherein is healing for men (16/69).' About black cumin, the Apostle of Allah (sawas) said, 'There lies in black cumin a cure for every malady except death.' These two are neither hot nor cold, nor they are characterized by any specific feature; rather, they are a cure wherever they are used."³

2. Al-Hasan ibn Shadhan reported Imam al-Jawad (as) to have said, "The best treatment for quartan fever is to have honey mixed *faludhaj* with extra saffron⁴, and nothing else should be had on that day."⁵

Treatment for jaundice

Muhammad ibn Yahya reported from Muhammad ibn '«sa, from 'Ali ibn Mahziyar who said that he was invited to lunch by Imam al-Jawad (as) who served him grouse, saying, "The flesh of this bird is blessed.

1. Ibn Shahr'ashub, *Manaqib Ali Abi-Talib* 4:389.

2. Tertian fever is a type of fever that recurs every alternate day.

3. Ibn Bastam, *Tibb al-A'immah* p. 51; al-Hurr al-'Amili, *Wasa'il al-Shi'ah* 25:101/hadith 15; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 59:100/hadith 23.

4. *Faludhaj* is a sweetmeat made of flour, water, and honey.

5. Ibn Bastam, *Tibb al-A'immah* pp. 51-52; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 59:100/hadith 24.

My father liked it. He used to prescribe it to those affected with jaundice.¹ As a treatment, they should eat its flesh grilled."²

Treatment of hernia

Ahmad ibn Ibrahim ibn Riyah reported al-Sabbah ibn Muharib as saying: I was present with Abu-Ja'far the son of al-Rida when someone informed him that Shabib ibn Jabir was affected with a violent hernia that paralyzed even his face and eyes. Prescribing a medicine, Imam al-Jawad (as) said, "Five mitigals³ of dianthus are put in a dry vessel the neck of which is tied well before it is coated with clay and placed in sunlight for a whole day in summer or two days in winter. The dianthus is then taken out and crushed softly. It should be then mixed with rainwater until it becomes deliquescent. The person suffering the hernia may then lie down on his back and the dianthus powder is spread over on the rupture. He should keep lying down until the dianthus powder has dried out, because only then will Allah heal him and he will regain the best of health, by the permission of Allah the All-exalted."

Some of our friends hurried to the affected person to convey this glad news to him. When he used that prescription, he was restored to the best of health.⁴

Treatment for permanent menstruation

Muhammad ibn Yahya reported from Muhammad ibn '«sa, from 'Ali ibn Mahziyar who said that a bondmaid was affected by such permanent menstruation that it did not cease at all until she was on the verge of death. Abu-Ja'far (Imam al-Jawad) ordered that she

1. Jaundice is a condition characterized by yellowness of the skin, conjunctiva, and tissues, and occasionally disordered vision, often due to obstruction of the bile duct or disease of the liver.

2. Shaykh Al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 6:312/hadith 5; al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 25:49/hadith 2.

3. Mitigal (also called miskal) is a unit of weight equal to about 4.25 grams or 0.6 ounce.

4. Ibn Bastam, Tibb al-A'immah p. 70; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 59:186/hadith 2.

should be fed with lentil flour.¹ The bondmaid's menstrual flow ceased and she was restored to health once she was served with the lentil flour soup.²

Treatment for stomach flu and palpitations

Muhammad ibn 'Ali Zanjawayh the physician reported 'Abdullah ibn 'Uthman to have said: I complained to Abu-Ja'far Muhammad ibn 'Ali ibn Musa (as) about stomach flu and palpitations (rapid and strong heartbeat) with which I was affected.

He asked, "Why do you not use the medicine of my father, which is useful for treating all diseases?"

"Son of the Apostle of Allah," I said. "What is that medicine?"

He answered, "It is very familiar among our partisans (the Shia)."

I asked, "My master and lord! Please consider me one of your partisans and describe this medicine to you so that I will use it for myself and teach it to the people."

The Imam (as) started, "You may take equal quantities of saffron,³ pyrethrum,¹ spikenard,² cardamom,³ henbane,⁴ white hellebore,⁵ and

1. Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq ('as) is reported as saying, "Lentil flour quenches thirst, strengthens the stomach, cures seventy maladies, smothers the bile, and cools the abdomen." Lentil flour was always with Imam al-Sadiq (as) on all of his journeys. Whenever any of his servants was affected with blood excitement, the Imam would recommend him to drink the lentil flour soup, because it would calm the blood and extinguish the heat of the body. (Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 6:307/hadith 1)

Commenting on this report, 'Allamah al-Majlisi (in Bihar al-Anwar 63:282-283/hadith28) says, "Two reasons have been mentioned for the lentil flour soup smothering the bile and cooling the heat of the abdomen. Firstly, this herb cools the hot mixtures and, secondly, it thickens the blood and calms its pressure; therefore, the blood slows its flow in the veins. For this reason, it helps staunch menstrual flow."

2. Shaykh al-Kulayni, al-Kafi 6:307/hadith 2; al-Hurr al-'Amili, Wasa'il al-Shi'ah 25:21/hadith 1; al-Majlisi, Bihar al-Anwar 63:282/hadith 28.

3. Saffron is a perennial herb in the family Iridaceae. It is of a large variety of categories, some of which are terrestrial and others chromosomal, which

is famously known by physicians and in medicine. It is however hot, dry, and a tranquillizer; i.e. soul-exhilarating. The best kind of saffron is the fresh nice-coloured, sweet-smelling, with a little whitish colour on the hairs, plump, sound-looking, quick to tint, and neither sticky nor crumbled. Geckos do not enter houses in which there is saffron. See Muwaffaq al-Din al-Baghdadi, *al-Tibb min al-Kitab wa'l-Sunnah* p. 113; Ibn Sina (Avicenna), *al-Qanun* 1:306; al-Fayruz'abadi, *al-Qamus al-Muhit* 2:39.

1. Pyrethrum, or pyrethrum flower, (in Arabic, 'aqarqarha) is an herb of the genus *Chrysanthemum*, whose roots are used in medicine. It is found in large quantities in Africa. According to Dr. Ramzi Fattah, in *Ihya' al-Tadhkirah fi'l-Nabatat al-Tibbiyah wa'l-Mufradat al-'Attariah* p. 430, pyrethrum is the origin of mountain tarragon. It helps drive out phlegm and cures toothache, coughing, breast pains, stomach flu, and liver flue. When gargled in the mouth, it removes angina pectoris (a condition marked by a suffocating, oppressive pain or discomfort).

2. In *al-Qamus al-Muhit* 3:398, al-Fayruz'abadi writes down, "Spikenard (sunbul or sunbul al-'asafir) is a sweet-smelling herb, the best kind of which is the Syrian one, while the weakest is the Indian. It stimulates the appetite, discharges gases of the stomach, strengthens the brain, liver, spleen, kidney, and intestines, and causes urination. One of its distinctive features is that it stops abnormal uterine bleeding (metrorrhagia). The European spikenard is the herb known as nardin (nard)."

3. Cardamom is the fruit of an Indian plant used as fragrance and as spices. It strengthens the stomach and liver, cures nausea and flu, and causes constipation. However, the big cardamom is more intense in constipation than the small kind, but less pungent. See al-Fayruz'abadi, *al-Qamus al-Muhit* 4:39.

4. According to *al-Mu'jam al-Wasit* 1:71, henbane is a kind of narcotized medical herb of the aubergine family. Defining henbane, the author of *al-Qamus al-Muhit* 1:179 states that this herb is analgesic (i.e. relieves pain); it relieves the pains of tumours, pimples, and ears. The worst kind of it is the black followed by the red, but the best of it is the white.

5. Hellebore is a plant the leaves of which look like a lamb's tongue. There are two kinds: the white and the black, both of which dispel grief, increase body temperature, cure epilepsy, mania, arthritis, vitiligo (leucoderma: hereditary patchy loss of melanin pigment from the skin), and hemiplegia (paralysis of one side of the body), and purge the body from glutinous excrements. Hellebore sometimes causes convulsions. Moreover, excess consumption of this herb may cause death. See al-Fayruz'abadi, *al-Qamus*

white pepper,¹ and a double quantity of euphorbia gum² and crush the whole quantity very gently. Then, you may sieve it out by a piece of silk cloth and knead it with foamless honey that should be twice as the weight of the powder. Those affected by palpitations may be given that product to drink. As for those who are affected with stomach flu, they can use this mixture after cooking it with cumin³

al-Muhit 3:225. In al-Jami' li-Mufradat al-Adwiyah wa'l-Aghdhiyah 2:55, Ibn al-Baytar quotes Ibn Sarabyun as saying, "Black hellebore relieves viscid bile and is used for treating the chronic and incurable diseases that require laxative medicines for the bile, such as pains of the thorax. It also helps purge intestines, uterus, and urinary bladder, and is used for treating bronchitic diseases."

1. Pepper is an Indian seed, the most beneficial kind of which is the white. However, when mixed with asphalt and chewed, both the white and the red pepper are useful for discharging sticky phlegm, warming up nerves and muscles, and treating colic and flatulence. When licked up, pepper is useful for treating coughing and thorax pain. A small quantity of pepper causes constipation while a large quantity causes gases, dries up excrements, causes urination, and cools the semen after coitus. See al-Fayruz'abadi, al-Qamus al-Muhit 4:32.

2. Euphorbium is a gum that is produced by a thorny tree. It is obtained by a process of cleaving the leaves of the tree, causing a gummy extract to flow from the leaves, which immediately dries up and freezes as soon as it is in contact with air. According to al-Fayruz'abadi in al-Qamus al-Muhit 4:255, euphorbia gum is a pain-assuasive medicine useful for treating sciatica (pain in the back of the hip and thigh), kidney infection, colic, insect stings and dog bites. It also discharges sticky phlegm, but aborts fetuses.

3. The seed of cumin is diuretic, eructating, digestive, and gas expelling. When chewed with salt, saliva dries up. Other kinds of cumin are aniseed, which is sweet cumin, black cumin, Armenian cumin, and the terrestrial black cumin. Defining cumin, Muwaffaq al-Din al-Baghdadi writes in al-Tibb min al-Kitab wa'l-Sunnah p. 147, "Cumin is so hot that it heals colic and expels gases of the stomach. When soaked in vinegar and eaten, it stops lumps of clay and dust. It is also reported that anything changes as soon as it enters the human body, except for cumin."

water. If they do, they will be restored to health by the permission of Allah the Almighty."¹

Treatment for Renal Calculi

Muhammad ibn Hakkam reported Muhammad ibn al-Nadr, the teacher of Imam al-Jawad's sons, as saying: One day, I complained to Imam al-Jawad (as) about the pain that I suffered because of renal calculi.

He (as) suggested, "Why have you not yet used the all-healing medicine of my father?"

I said, "My master and lord, please prescribe it for me."

The Imam (as) said, "We have it here with us." He then asked one of his bondmaids to bring him the green jar. When the bondmaid did so, the Imam (as) took out a small quantity from it and said, "You may mix this amount with cooked rue² juice or radish³ juice. If you do, you will be restored to health."

1. Ibn Bastam, *Tibb al-A'imma* p. 90; al-Hurr al-'Amili, *al-Fusul al-Muhimmah fi Usul al-A'imma* 3:201; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar*, 59:247/hadith 7.

2. Commenting on this narration, 'Allamah al-Majlisi writes in *Bihar al-Anwar* 59:145/hadith 2, "In his book *al-Qanun*, 1:388, Ibn Sina says, 'Wet rue is hot and dry in the second element (i.e. air), dry rue is hot and dry in the third element (i.e. water), and dry sari rue is hot and dry in the fourth element (i.e. earth). Its heated juice, when put in pomegranate peel and poured in an inflamed ear, purifies it. It also assuages pains, buzzing, and loud noises in the head, and kills worms. It is used as an ointment for head wounds. It generally sharpens the sight, especially when its juice is mixed with fennel and honey and eaten or put on the edges of the eye just like kohl. Mixed with fine flour, it can be used as a soothant for eye pain.'"

According to *al-Ma'jam al-Wasit* 1:424, rue is a kind of medical herb of the family Rutaceae. Its leaves are said to be similar to thyme, but its smell stinks.

3. Defining radish, the author of *al-Tibb min al-Kitab wa'l-Sunnah* writes p. 140, "Radish is consumed in small quantities because it is hot. It opens liver occlusions, and helps digestion although it is hard to digest. Eating radish may bring about lice." As a footnote, the author adds, "Radish is usually

I mixed it with rue juice and drank; I have not felt that pain since.¹

6. Imam al-Jawad and Supplication

The following is a set of magnificent supplicatory prayers that Imam al-Jawad (as) reported on the authority of his fathers who reported them from the Holy Prophet (sawas) to whom they were revealed by Allah the Almighty. They are considered as psalms of Imam al-Jawad that comprise his supplicatory and confidential prayers.

Sayyid Ibn Tawus reported: Muhammad ibn Harith al-Nawfali, the servant of Imam Muhammad al-Jawad (as), reported that when al-Ma'mun, the 'Abbasid ruler, decided to give his daughter in marriage to Imam Muhammad ibn 'Ali (as), the Imam (as) wrote this letter to him:

Every wife must be given a dowry from the property of her husband. As for us (i.e. the Holy Imams), Almighty Allah has put off our properties to give them to us in the other world just as He has given you your properties in advance in this worldly life. I thus decide to dower your daughter with "the means to the response to the petitions." A number of confidential prayers, my father has given me these supplicatory means and said that he had received them from his father Musa, who told that he had received them from his father Ja'far, who told that he had received them from his father Muhammad, who told that he had received them from his father 'Ali, who told that he had received them from his father al-Husayn, who told that he had received them from his brother al-Hasan, who told that he had received them from his father 'Ali ibn Abi-Talib, who told that he had received them from the Holy Prophet Muhammad, who told that he had received them from Archangel Gabriel who said, 'Muhammad, the Almighty Lord conveys His greetings to you and says that He is carrying to you the keys to the treasures of this world and the other world. He thus

eaten with the other appetizers and hors d'oeuvres. Containing vitamin C, it is diuretic, digestive, and anti-cough.

1. Ibn Bastam, *Tibb al-A'immah* p. 91; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 59:249/hadith 11.

advises you to use them as the means to the response to your petitions. Through these confidential prayers, you can attain your desires and succeed in winning your requests. Therefore, do not use them in worldly requests rather than the other-worldly; lest you lessen the value of your other-worldly prizes. These means are ten supplicatory prayers by which you can knock at the doors of your desires and they will be opened wide before you, and you can ask for things, and you will be given access to them.'

These confidential prayers¹ are as follows:

A. Confidential Prayer for Guidance to the Best

O Allah, my prayer to guide me with regard to the choose the best matter amongst those different options, which I have asked You to guide me to do the desirable and accessible, grant abundant gifts, gratify the requests, make easy the gains, guide to the most excellent way, drive to the most praiseworthy consequences, and guard me from dreadful calamities. O Allah, I pray You to guide me to the best choice with regard to what I am determined to do to which my reason has directed me. O Allah, (please) smooth its progress to me, make easy its difficulty, save me from what concerns me, repel from me what is terrible, and, O Lord, change its bad consequences into good end results, its dreadful parts into safety, its unlikely gains into possible ones, and its barrenness into fertility. O Allah, release Your response to me, make successful my appeal, grant me my need, cut off whatever hinders it, and halt its misfortunes. O Allah, give me the pennon of triumph, the true guidance to the best of what I have asked You for, the abundant gain of what I have prayed to You for, and the bestowals of favours in what I have hoped from You for. O Allah, attach all that to success, adorn it exclusively with righteousness, make clear before my eyes the reasons for guiding me to this choice and the factors of winning it, tighten the grip around the throat of its difficulties, and refresh its dying easiness. O Allah, acquaint me

1. It is worth mentioning that these confidential prayers comprise more figurative expressions than literal. [Translator].

with its confusable matters, release its detained affairs, and make firm its foundations so that it will come carrying gains, removing debts, bringing about swift benefits, and perpetuating its effect. Verily, You always have more to give and take the initiative to magnanimous conferrals.

B. Confidential Prayer for True Repentance

O Allah, it is my hope for Your expansive mercy that has motivated me to ask for accepting my true repentance, and it is my hope for Your forbearance and leniency that has encouraged me to beg for Your security and pardon. O my Lord, I have committed sins, which are worthy of encountering Your punishment, and [I have committed] wrongdoings, which have been observed by the eyes of eradication and due to which I deserve Your painful chastisement despite Your justice, and because I have committed these wrongdoings, I earn Your annihilating punishment. I am thus afraid that these wrongdoings will obstruct You from responding to me and will make You refuse to grant me my requests, since they are violative enough to abolish my petition and to cut off the factors of achieving my desires, because their burdens have pressed heavily upon my back and their loads have been too heavy for me to carry. But when I recalled Your forbearance, O my Lord, with the wrongdoers, Your forgiveness to the sinful, and Your mercy to the disobedient, I, carrying my trust in You and relying on You, came towards You, throwing myself in Your Presence, complaining about my grief to You, praying to You, O my Lord, for what I do not deserve from You; that is relief from my distress, and for what I do not earn from You; that is alleviation of my anguish, declaring my true repentance before You, O my Lord, and putting my trust in You, O my Master. O Allah, so (please) bestow upon me with relief from You, confer upon me with creating for me an easy way out, lead me, out of Your clemency to the straightest path, make me, out of Your omnipotence, deviate from the crooked path, release me, out of Your acceptance of my true repentance, from the prison of ordeals, set me free from my capture, out of Your mercy, provide me with favours, out of Your pleasure, give to me generously, out of Your benevolence, steady me, O my Lord, from my slip, relieve me from my agony, have mercy upon my sobbing, do not make my prayer inaccessible, and

by accepting my repentance, (please) strengthen my back, confirm my strength, set aright all my affairs, grant me long life, and have mercy upon me on the day of my resurrection and the time of my restoring to life. Verily, You are all-magnanimous, all-generous, all-forgiving, and all-merciful. And (please) send blessings upon Muhammad and his Household.

C. Confidential Prayer for Help in Travel

O Allah, I intend to travel; so, choose for me the best in my journey, make clear before me and inspire to me the right understanding of the most accurate attitude, release my determination by means of straightforwardness, include me with safety during my journey, furnish me with abundant fortune and honour, and preserve me with excellent safeguard and watching. O Allah, send away from me the inconvenience of journeys, make easy for me the difficulty of roughness, unwrap before me the rug of covering the stations, bring nearer to me remote watering places, and make spaces to be longer between the steps of our mounts, so that the remote distances will be nearby and the rough roads will be smooth. O Allah, make me find in this journey success over evil omens, endue me with achievement of wellbeing, safeguard against failure, guidance to survive dangers, incentives to gain adequacy, and good opportunity to be protected against authorities. O Allah, cause my journey to be a reason for winning marvelous security and obtaining profits. Make night cover me against banes and daytime defend me against perishing things. Out of Your omnipotence, (please) hold back robbers from reaching me and, out of Your power, guard me against beasts so that safety will accompany me on my journey, wellbeing will attend me, good omens will be driven along with me, easiness will embrace me, difficulty will depart from me, triumph will agree with me, and security will associate with me. Verily, You are the Lord of bestowals, conferrals, power, and might, and You have power over all things and You know and regard all of Your servants.

D. Confidential Prayer for Sustenance

O Allah, send forth on me the bails of Your sustenance in abundance, make the clouds of Your favoring rain on me heavily, keep continuous the drizzle of Your gifts to me plenteously, let the

superfluity of Your graces to me fall on my neediness increasingly, make me in ceaseless need for Your magnanimity, make me dispense with those who are in want for what is possessed by You, medicate the malady of my poverty with the remedy of Your favours, refresh my dead dearth with Your conferrals, give as alms to my scarcity Your profuse gifts, and give to my shortage Your generous grants. O my Lord, pave the way of sustenance towards me, strengthen its foundations with me, make the fountains of Your expansive mercy gush out for me, make the rivers of opulent living flow before me, out of Your clemency, cause the land of my poverty to be barren, fertilize my barren harsh paucity, hold off all obstacles against my gaining sustenance, and cut off any relationship between destitution and me. O Allah, target at me the most productive arrows of opulent sustenance and endow me with the most perpetual affluent living. O Allah, equip me with the shirts of opulence and garments of comfort, for, O my Lord, I expect You to do me the favour of removing my distress, to bestow upon me with the grace of cutting off the impediment, to endue me with the errand of eliminating my impoverishment, and to confer upon me connecting my cord to Your generosity through facilitation of my affairs. O Allah, make the sky of Your sustenance shower me with large quantities of the water of Your heavy clouds, make me too rich to need Your creatures through Your repetitive conferrals of favours, throw deadly shots at the vulnerable spots of my financial deprivation, carry the riding of my misfortune on my behalf on the swiftest riding animals, and strike my distress, on behalf of me, with the exterminating sword. O my Lord, present me with expansive favours, supply me with ever-growing properties, safeguard me against the distress of paucity, grasp against me the evil of aridity, extend before me the carpet of fruitfulness, serve me with copious doses of the water of Your sustenance, pave before me many paths of Your massive abdications, surprise me with wealth and money through which You may refresh me from scarcity, start my mornings with solvency, and start my evenings with the ability to meet my liabilities. Verily, You are the Lord of great bestowal, massive favours, and plentiful conferral, and You are the All-Magnanimous and All-Generous.

E. Confidential Prayer for Seeking Protection

O Allah, I pray for Your protection against the striking mishaps of tribulation and the horrors of unbearable adversity. So, O my Lord, protect me against the blows of affliction, veil me from the sways of ordeals, save me from surprising punishments, and shelter me from the removal of blessings and the slipping of steps. O Allah, place me inside the fence of Your almightiness and the barrier of Your haven against unexpected overtaking of calamities and against swift sudden misfortunes. O Allah; O my Lord, (please) cause the lands of ordeals to sink down, cause the yards of crises to quake, cast a shadow on the sun of misfortune, uproot the mountains of evil, remove the vicissitudes of time, and drive back the obstacles in all affairs. (Please) take me to the ponds of safety, carry me on mounts of honour, make Your excuse of my transgressions to be my companion, and include me with Your covering of my defects. O my Lord, grant me liberally Your elegances, Your removal of my tribulations, and Your fending off of my adversities. (Please) ward off from me the thoraxes of Your chastisement, repel from me Your painful punishment, safeguard me from the ups and downs of days, rescue me from the evil end results of affairs, guard me against all anticipated matters, split the rock of tribulation in my affairs, and paralyze its hand lest it reaches me as long as I am alive. Verily, You are the All-glorious Lord who originates, produces, and does whatever He wills.

F. Confidential Prayer for Accepting Repentance

O Allah, I have come to You with the integrity of sincere repentance, the confirmation of a valid determination, the prayer of a limpid heart, and the declaration of a clear-cut statement. So, O Allah, accept from me my sincere repentance, the approaching of my swift turning to You, and the deadly blows of my fear of Your punishment. O my Lord, meet my repentance with abundant reward, generous final return, absolvment of castigation, warding off penalty, winning of returning to You, and covering with screen [against sinning]. O Allah, erase my fixed sins, wash out all my defects by accepting my repentance, and make my repentance polish my heart, to diagnose the insight of my mind, to rinse my filth, to purify my bodily impurity, to set aright my inner self, and

to urge my insight to act upon it [i.e. my repentance] immediately. O my Lord, admit my repentance, because it emanates from my sincere intention and from the most accurate and purest form of my perception. It [i.e. my repentance] also involves perfect determination of my inner self, an attempt to keep my soul pure, my firmness to turn to You in repentance, and my decision to run for obeying Your orders. O Allah, by means of my repentance, (please) drive away the darkness of insistence on sinning from me, erase the burdensome sins that I have committed, and dress me in the clothing of piety and the garments of true guidance, for I am determined to remove the rein of acts of disobedience to You from my neck and to strip the shirt of sinning from my body, holding fast to Your omnipotence, O my Lord, seeking Your help against myself by Your almightiness, entrusting with You my repentance from breaching my covenant with You by Your protection of me, taking refuge in Your haven against that You may disappoint me, believing that there is neither might nor power except with You.

G. Confidential Prayer for Help in Undertaking Hajj

O Allah, (please) grant me success to go on *hajj* pilgrimage, which You have imposed upon whoever is capable of going on it, appoint for me in it a guide and a director to it, make accessible for me the remote paths, help me carry out its rituals, prevent fire from consuming my body due to my entering into the state of ritual consecration, and increase my power and my endurance on my hajj journey. O my Lord, grant me the opportunity to present myself in Your presence and to hasten my steps to You and grant me success in obtaining abundant gain. My Lord, grant me opportunity to attach the situation of the grand hajj to Muzdalifah, the holy monument, deciding it to be a step nearer towards Your mercy and a path towards Your paradise. Help me to stop at the situation of the Holy Monument and the situation of ritual consecration. Prepare me to carry out the rituals, to immolate the offertory camels, causing their blood to gush forth and their throats to be cut, and make me shed the poured blood (of these animals), offer the slaughtered offertory animals, cut off their throats exactly as You have instructed, and submit them as offerings exactly as You have prescribed. O Allah, make me present myself at the Feast Prayer, hoping for what You have promised to give, fearful of

what You have threatened Your punishment, shaving or cutting short the hair of my head, exerting all efforts to obey You painstakingly, and throwing at the statues seven pebbles after seven. O Allah, make me enter the court and the yard of Your house, the place of Your security, Your Ka'bah, and to give to the poor, the beggars, and the needy who ask from You. O Allah, endue me generously with abundant reward after my return and in my journey back. O Allah, seal my performance of the rituals of hajj and the termination of my cries with the statements of response to You with acceptance from You and with clemency that You show me. O most merciful of all those who show mercy!

H. Confidential Prayer for Removing Persecution

O Allah, the persecutions against Your servant have become so prevalent in Your lands that they have put an end to justice, interrupted all ways, eradicated the right, thwarted truthfulness, enshrouded charity, demonstrated evil, extinguished piety, removed true guidance, dislodged decency, planted harm, promoted corruption, strengthened obstinacy, spread out prejudice, and exceeded all bounds. O Allah! O my Lord, nothing can eliminate all that except Your authority and nothing can deliver from it except Your obliging favours. O Allah! O my Lord, (please) mutilate persecution, demolish the mountains of oppression, stagnate the business of evil, grant victory to those who deter from it, harvest the roots of the people of prejudice, and attire them with shrinkage after escalation. O Allah, afflict them with inaction immediately, send down on them exemplary punishments, and put to death the life of wickedness so that the terrorized will be secured, the terrified will calm down, the hungry will become full, the lost will be guarded, the fugitive will find a place of settlement, the escapee will return home, the poor will be satisfied, the refugee will be sheltered, the old will be respected, infants will be shown mercy, the wronged will be treated fairly, the wrongdoers will be humiliated, the distressed will be relieved, agonies will be driven away, the populace will find rest, discrepancy will be wiped out, knowledge will be exalted, peace will be prevalent, dispersion will be amassed, faith will be strengthened, and the Qur'an will be practically recited. Verily, You are the Master, the Munificent, and the Favourer.

I. Confidential Thanksgiving Prayer

O Allah, all praise be to You for driving away the imminent misfortunes and the overwhelming harms, for relieving from the calamitous hardships, and for the succession of the profuse blessings. All praise be to You for Your pleasant bestowals, praiseworthy conferrals, and great boons. All praise be to You for Your very great benevolence, torrential welfare, and easy-to-do obligations and for Your driving away of difficulties. All praise be to You, O Lord, for multiplying the little thanksgiving, enduing with abundant rewards, excusing the heavy burdens, accepting the improper apologies, lessening the exorbitant loads, making easy the difficult situations, and dispelling horrible matters. All praise be to You for Your dispelling the misfortunes, Your granting abundant charity, Your driving away terrifying matters, and Your removing oppressive issues. All praise be to You for the little mandates, much alleviation, the strengthening of the feeble, and the assisting of the distressed. All praise be to You for Your long-term respite, Your incessant favours, Your chasing off fruitlessness, Your praiseworthy deeds, and Your continuous donations. All praise be to You for putting off the looming punishment, shunning sudden chastisement, paving the way back to You, and sending down the rain of the clouds. Verily, You are the All Tender, the All Bountiful.

J. Confidential Prayer for Granting the Requests

Whoever You have ordered to pray to You is worthily required to pray to You and whoever You have promised to respond to his prayers is worthily required to hope for Your response. O Allah, I have a request [that I need You to grant] that I am too short to fulfil, too powerless to do, and too weak to attain. My soul that is prone to evil and my deceiving archenemy from which I am suffering have beguiled me into shunning wishing for Your help in this request. O Allah, so (please) grant my request the most blissful success, direct it towards the path of prosperity, expand my breast with hopeful petition for Your relief, facilitate my affairs through the ways of welfare, and establish for me triumph through making me attain what I have hoped for and gain what I have wished for. O Allah, (please) grant me access to the fulfillment of my requests

through attainment of my wish and achievement of my desire. O Allah, in the name of Your Nobility, (please) protect me against disappointment, despair, despondency, and frustration. O Allah, You are full of plentiful gifts, You are true to Your words, You have power over all things, and You know and regard all of Your servants.

7. Sermons of Imam al-Jawad

Al-Hasan ibn 'Ali ibn Shu'bah al-Harrani, the author of *Tuhaf al-'Uqul*, has dedicated a chapter in his book to the narrations that reported the sermons of Imam Muhammad ibn 'Ali al-Jawad (as), yet without referring to the chains of authority of these reports. These sermons are quoted below:

Short Maxims of Imam al-Jawad

1. Imam al-Jawad (as) instructed a man who asked him for advice, saying, "Become steadfast, embrace poverty, reject lust, oppose your passions, and know that you cannot be out of Allah's sight; so, consider how you behave."
2. Allah revealed the following to one of His prophets: It is true that your asceticism will give you comfort and your devotion to Me will endear you to Me; but did you antagonize My enemies and cherish My saints?
3. It is related that highway robbers once stole a large amount of cloth that belonged to Imam al-Jawad (as); so the chief of the caravan sent a letter to the Imam informing him of the incident. The Imam answered:

Our souls and riches are only part of the pleasant gifts and deposited loans of God. He makes us enjoy some of them pleasantly and delightfully and seizes whatever He will but then compensates for them with rewards and merits. He whose intolerance overcomes his steadfastness will waste these rewards. God protect us against this.
4. Whoever detested a matter that he witnessed is regarded as if he were absent from it; and whoever was absent from a matter that he loved is regarded as if he has witnessed it.

5. Whoever listens to a caller has served him. If that caller was calling on behalf of Allah, the listener has then served Allah. But if the caller was calling on behalf of Satan, the listener has then served Satan.

6. Abu Hashim al-Ja'fari related: On the wedding day of Imam al-Jawad (as) and Ummul-Fadl the daughter of al-Ma'mun, I said to the Imam, "Master, the blessing of this day is clearly great for us." Yet, he answered, "O Abu Hashim, (you should say instead:) Allah's blessings on this day have been great for us."

"Yes, master," I said. "What should I say about the day?"

The Imam answered, "You should say only good things about the day so that you will be given at least part of these good things."

"Yes, master," I said. "I will follow this instruction completely."

The Imam said, "You will be guided to the true guidance and you will see only the good if you adhere to this instruction."

7. In one of his letters to a disciple of his, Imam al-Jawad (as) wrote the following: "We are only taking from this world. He whose belief and religion are the same as his companion will surely accompany him wherever he goes. The next world is surely the abode that lasts forever."

8. Delay in repentance is deception; excessive procrastination is perplexity; arrogance against Allah is perdition; and insistence on committing sins is challenge of Allah's unexpected retribution. *'No one can consider himself secure from the retribution of Allah except those who are lost.'*¹

9. A cameleer who had taken Imam al-Jawad (as) from al-Madinah to al-Kufah begged him for more money although the Imam had already given him four hundred dinars (i.e. golden coins). At this, the Imam (as) expressed, "How strange this is! You should have known that Allah's increasing gifts never cease unless His servant ceases showing gratitude to Him."

1. *Surat Al-A'raf*, 7:99.

10. To put a matter into effect before preparing for it properly leads to spoiling it.

11. A true believer has a constant need for success from Allah, self-preaching, and acceptance of those who tend to give advice.

12. Through his chain of authority, Shaykh al-Mufid reported from 'Ali ibn Mahziyar who reported Bakr ibn Salih as saying: My son-in-law wrote the following letter to Abu-Ja'afar Imam al-Jawad (as): "My father is *Nasibi* (i.e. notorious antagonist of the Ahl al-Bait) and has wretched views about the Ahl al-Bayt. I have experienced much hardship and pressure from him. I write to request a special prayer for me, may I be your ransom, and to ask you to advise me what my line of action should be. Should I confront him or comply with his whims?"

Imam al-Jawad (as) wrote back: "I have understood your letter and what you have mentioned about your father. God willing, I shall never forget you in my prayers. And it is better to be compliant rather than resorting to open confrontation. For with every hardship, there is ease. Be patient, for the end result is always in favour of those who are mindful of duties towards Allah. May Allah keep you firm on the path of those whom you have accepted as authorities. You and we are all entrusted in the care of Allah, and with Him, no trust is lost!"

Bakr said: After that, Allah caused a change of heart in his father; so, he in turn became compliant to the son.¹

13. Meeting with one's brethren-in-faith widens the intellect and fertilizes wisdom, even though it may be infrequent.²

14. Abu-Hashim al-Ja'fari reported that he heard Imam al-Jawad (as) saying, "In Paradise, there is a door known as *ma'ruf* (favor), none can enter Paradise from that door except those who do favours to others."

Abu-Hashim continued: Upon hearing these words, I praised Allah the Almighty secretly and felt happy, because I used to grant people

1. Shaykh al-Mufid, al-Amali, Assembly 23/hadith 20.

2. Ibid Assembly 38/hadith 13.

their needs. Immediately, the Imam (as) looked at me and said, "Yes, keep on doing so, because the people of favour in this world will be the people of favour in the hereafter. May Allah include you, Abu-Hashim, with them and show you mercy!"¹

15. Abu Hashim al-Ja'fari also reported that Muhammad ibn Salih al-Armani asked Imam al-Jawad (as) to explain this holy Qur'anic verse to him: "*Allah's is the command before and after. (30/4)*"

The Imam (as) answered, "This verse means that the whole command belongs to Allah alone before He issues it and after He issues whatever He wishes."

I said to myself, "This is the very interpretation of Allah's statement: 'Surely, His is the creation and the command. Blessed is Allah, the Lord of the world. (7/54)'"

I then addressed the Imam, saying "I bear witness that you are indeed the argument of Allah and the son of His argument against His servants."²

16. Whoever complies with his fancies has in fact given his enemies what they wished to get.³

17. The slips of those who always commit immoralities are never excused.⁴

18. Unappreciated blessings are just like unforgettable sins.

19. How can he whose protector is Allah be lost? How can he who is chased by Allah escape Him? And as for anyone who resorts to someone other than Allah, Allah will leave him alone with that one.

1. This narration has been reported about Imam al-Hasan al-'Askari (as) but not Imam al-Jawad (as). See Ibn Hamzah al-Tusi, *al-Thaqib fi'l-Manaqib* p. 564/hadith 501.

2. Al-Hasan ibn Sulayman al-Hilli, *Mukhtasar Basa'ir al-Darajat* p. 161.

3. Al-Halawani, *Nuzhat al-Nazir* p. 134/hadith 3; as quoted from al-Shahid al-Awwal, *al-Durrah al-Bahirah* p. 39; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 67:78/hadith 11.

4. Al-Halawani, *Nuzhat al-Nazir* p. 135; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 67:78.

20. If you behave sedately, you will achieve your goal or at least be close to achieving it.
21. Whoever is unaware of what he receives (i.e. of words and deeds), will be shocked by the results (i.e. the advantages and disadvantages).¹
22. "Whoever gives himself over to confidence before experience, will have exposed himself to perdition and a tiresome end result."
23. Whoever moves away from compliance (i.e. willingness to please), will come close to misfortune.
24. Beware of befriending the wicked, for they are like an unsheathed sword: its visage is good but its impact is bad.
25. Dignity of true believers lies in their dispensing with people.
26. You must never feel injured due to the wrath of those whose pleasure lies in injustice.
27. To be the trustee of the traitorous is complete treason.⁽²⁾
28. He who acts without knowledge (of what he is doing) will thwart more than doing well.
29. Devoting a deed to Allah the All-exalted with pure intention is more acceptable than tiring the organs doing it.
30. Whoever blames his friend (in a nice manner) without suspecting his friendship is required to please him (by means of apology) before his friend asks him to do so.
31. To put trust in Allah is the price of every precious thing and a scale that rises to all excellences.
32. When the predestined fall, the space becomes too narrow.

1. Al-Daylami, *A'lam al-Din* p. 309; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 75:364/hadith 5.

2. Al-Halawani, *Nuzhat al-Nazir* p. 137; al-Daylami, *A'lam al-Din* p. 309; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 75:36.

33. Whoever does not deal with his friend in terms of good faith will doubt his donations.

34. He who refrains from giving you good advice lest he stops against your desires, is in fact your enemy.

35. Desires are sought through earnest entreaty, although they are subjected to the will of Allah. Wellbeing is always the best of His donations.

36. Do not incur the animosity of anyone before you recognize the status he enjoys in the sight of Allah the Almighty; for if he is virtuous, then Allah shall never give him up to you; and if he is sinful, then to know this truth about him is enough to prevent you from antagonizing him.

37. Never pretend to be a saint of Allah in public but an enemy of Him in secret.

38. Self-restraint should be parallel to feelings of fear.

39. Vicissitudes of time unveil even the most latent secrets.

40. You should remain patient and keep yourself dignified if you were deprived of something, as you must be aware that you will not benefit from it anyway.¹

41. Abu-Ja'far (Imam al-Jawad) is reported to have quoted his father relating Imam 'Ali (as) as saying: When the Apostle of Allah (sawas) ordered me to go to Yemen, he gave these teachings to me: O 'Ali, he who chooses the best among many choices will never feel perplexed; and he who seeks others' consultation will never feel regret. O 'Ali, do not miss the early dawn hour, for the earth seems easier at night than in daylight. O 'Ali, begin your journey in the early morning in the Name of Allah, for Allah the All-exalted has decided to bless my people who begin their works in the early morning.²

1. Al-Halawani, *Nuzhat al-Nazir* p. 137; al-Daylami, *A'lam al-Din* p. 309; al-Majlisi, *Bihar al-Anwar* 75:36.

2. Al-Khatib al-Baghdadi, *Tarikh Baghdad* 3:54-55; Ibn Khallakan, *Wafiat al-A'yan* 4:175.

42. Whoever acquires a brother-in-faith has won a house in Paradise.
43. Even if the heavens and the earth are restricted over a servant (of Allah) who then acts piously to Allah, He will most surely make for him an outlet from them.
44. Verily, whoever puts his trust in Allah, he will be shown delight by Him.
45. Whoever commits his soul to Allah, He will save him from everything.
46. "Putting one's confidence in Allah is a fortress to which none resorts except true believers."
47. Trusting in Allah saves from all evils and guards against all enemies.
48. Religiousness is dignity. Knowledge is treasure. Silence is light. The utmost of asceticism is abstinence from prohibitions. Nothing ruins religion more effectively than innovation. Nothing ruins men more than greed. Subjects are set aright through their leaders only. Misfortunes are dispelled by supplication.
49. Whoever embarks upon patience, he/she will be guided directly up-to the final result of victory. Whoever insults and becomes offensive towards others, he/she will be answered back with an insult. Whoever plants trees of piety will harvest the fruits of hope.
50. Four things help one work hard: health, self-sufficiency, skill, and success (granted by Allah).
51. Some servants of Allah are endued exclusively and permanently with His favours as long as they give part of them as alms. But if they refrain from doing so, Allah will take these favours from them and give them to others.
52. Those who do favours to others are in fact in more need of these favours than those to whom they are done. This is because the favourers gain rewards for doing favours and also gain pride and a good reputation. So, whenever one does a favour, one has in fact done that favour to himself first.
53. Whoever puts his hope in someone will fear him. Whoever is ignorant of something will try to find fault with it. Opportunities

come clandestinely. Much grief causes bodily ailments. The title of a true Muslim's record is their nobility of character.

54. Praise and approval is the title of the record of the truly happy.

55. Beauty lies in tongues, while perfection lies in intellect.

56. Chastity is the charm of poverty, thanksgiving the charm of richness, patience the charm of suffering misfortunes, modesty the charm of honourable lineage, eloquence the charm of speech, good learning the charm of narrating, gentleness the charm of teaching, politeness the charm of sapience, gaiety the charm of nobility, pretending to forget favours the charm of doing them, reverence the charm of prayers, supererogation the charm of satisfaction, and avoiding interference in others' affairs the charm of devoutness.

57. To avoid facing anyone with what he/she dislikes is sufficient indication of perfect chivalry. To abstain from harming others is a sign of your morality; to act kindly towards those toward whom you have duties is a sign of your liberality; to prefer others to yourself is a sign of your nobility; to stop complaining is a sign of your patience; to treat people fairly even in personal issues (i.e. when you are the wronged party) is a sign of your wisdom; to accept the truth as soon as it manifests itself is a sign of your impartiality; to warn others against whatever you do not accept against yourself is a sign of your advisability; to stop reproaching people before their rivals even when you are sure of their mistakes is a sign of your good neighbourliness; to avoid blaming others in the presence of those whom they dislike is a sign of your lenience; to accede to your friend and avoid opposing him is a sign of your sincerity in friendship; to appreciate the favours of those who do you favours is a sign of your gratitude; to realize your real esteem is a sign of your modesty; and to shun mentioning the faults of others and engage yourself in rectifying your own faults is a sign of your uprightness.

58. He who practices wrongdoing personally, he who helps him, and he who is pleased with his deed—these three are partners in that deed.

59. The day of justice is more unbearable in the sight of the wrongdoer than the day of injustice in the sight of the wronged.

60. Whoever fails to come to things from where they should come from, will fail to find any way out. Greed is always enchained by humility. Whoever seeks to live a long life must prepare for himself a heart that can tolerate misfortune.
61. The knowledgeable are always strangers, because they are surrounded by numerous ignorant ones.
62. To face misfortune with patience is a misfortune for those who gloat over your grief.
63. One's death lies between one's jaws. Good opinion is gained only when attached to deliberation. Bad opinion and immature opinion are indeed the worst supporters and the worst helpers.
64. Amicability (of others) can be attained through three characteristics: fairness in association, supporting in misfortune, and dealing with others on terms of wholeheartedness.
65. People are of different manners; and everyone acts according to his manner. People are also friends of one another. Yet friendship that is based on any other foundation than love for Allah will eventually turn into rivalry. Thus says Allah the Almighty and All-majestic: 'The friends shall on that day be enemies one to another, except the pious. (43/67)'
66. Whoever approves of a vice, will have a share in it.
67. Ingratitude of favours brings about (Allah's) wrath. He who rewards you by thanksgiving has in fact given you more than what he took from you.
68. Do not allow suspicion to ruin your relationship with a friend who deals with you kindly due to his certainty of your uprightness. Whoever advises a friend of his secretly has in fact acted kindly towards him, but whoever advises him in public, has in fact done harm to him.
69. A truly honourable man is he who has been honoured by knowledge, and a true chief is he who acts piously towards his Lord.
70. Do not deal with things before they attain their climax, lest you become sorry. Do not allow time to be prolonged for you, lest your hearts become hardened. Rather, show mercy to the weak amongst

you and ask Allah for mercy as a reward for your having shown mercy to them.

71. The least punishment of one who puts his hope in a wicked person is to be deprived of what he had hoped for.

72. Man's death due to sinning is more hideous than his death due to the termination of his life. Likewise, man's living with kind acts is more delightful than his living his life.¹

1. Al-Irbali, *Kashf al-Ghummah* 3:136-140, as quoted from al-Janabidhi's *Ma'alim al-'Itrah*. Ibn al-Sabbagh al-Maliki quotes the same from al-Janabidhi's book in *al-Fusul al-Muhimmah* pp. 260-263.

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